DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 471 124 CE 084 093

AUTHOR	Wallace, Jean E.
TITLE	Juggling It All: Exploring Lawyers' Work, Home, and Family Demands and Coping Strategies. Report of Stage One Findings. LSAC Research Report Series.
INSTITUTION	Law School Admission Council, Newtown, PA.
REPORT NO	LSAC-RR-00-02
PUB DATE	2002-09-00
NOTE	69p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Coping; Employed Women; *Employment Patterns; Employment Practices; *Employment Problems; Family Life; Family Needs; *Family Work Relationship; Foreign Countries; Housework; Interviews; *Lawyers; Marriage; Part Time Employment; *Quality of Life; Questionnaires; Sex Differences; Stress Management; Telephone Surveys; Time Management
IDENTIFIERS	*Alberta (Calgary); Full Time Employment

ABSTRACT

Lawyers' work, home, and family demands and their strategies for coping with those demands were examined through telephone interviews with practicing lawyers from Calgary, Alberta. Of the 121 lawyers interviewed, 56 were men and 44 were women who worked full-time and 21 were women who worked part-time. Sixty-seven percent of them were associates or partners at law firms. While the lawyers worked an average of 50 hours per week, more than half regularly worked evenings and weekends. Most considered their long hours necessary to meet client demands, professional expectations, and/or billing requirements, and many expressed considerable dissatisfaction with their job's time demands. Those time demands most often interfered with the lawyers' family time. The difficulty women face in combining a successful career and a balanced family life proved a general concern. Their division of household tasks appeared fairly traditional, with the wives tending to do more "female tasks" and husbands tending to do more "male tasks." About half those interviewed indicated that most of their stress was due primarily to work. Coping strategies cited by the lawyers included turning to their spouse and family for support, attempting to keep their work in perspective, and trying to place limits on their work time. The interview protocol is appended. (Contains 38 references.) (MN)

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LSAC RESEARCH REPORT SERIES

ED 471 124

Juggling It All: Exploring Lawyers' Work, Home, and Family Demands and Coping Strategies

Report of Stage One Findings

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Law School Admission Council
Research Report RR-00-02
September 2002

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Jean E. Wallace
Department of Sociology
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Executive Summary

This Executive Summary condenses information collected from 121 practicing lawyers who agreed to participate in telephone interviews in the fall of 1999 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada in the first stage of a two-stage project. This first stage identifies the demands and stresses lawyers face in their work and nonwork lives and investigates how they cope with them. The second stage will involve a large-scale, mail-out questionnaire that will examine the issues identified here in a more quantitative and representative fashion.

This report documents the amount of time lawyers spend working, their home life and family situations, how they meet their housework responsibilities and child care needs, how they spend their leisure time, how stressful they perceive their lives to be and why, who they turn to for support, and their overall satisfaction with and commitment to the practice of law.

The lawyers who were interviewed included 56 men and 44 women working full time and 21 women working part time. The average age is 38 and length of practice is approximately 10 years. Overall, the majority of women and men (67%) who participated in this study work in law firms either as associates or partners. Throughout the report comparisons are made among female lawyers working part time, female lawyers working full time, and male lawyers working full time in order to explore whether lawyers who differ by gender and/or work status experience different work and family stresses and cope with them in different ways.

The Time Demands of Practicing Law

The lawyers who were interviewed were asked to describe in detail the hours that they usually work in a typical week. Their reported answers clearly illustrate the time demands of practicing law. While lawyers in this study work on average 50 hours a week, more than half regularly work evenings and weekends. Most feel they have to work long hours in response to client demands, professional expectations, and/or billing requirements. In combination with the excessive time demands and workloads, many lawyers feel that they must place work as their first priority all of the time. If financially possible, most male and female lawyers would prefer to work fewer hours than they do now and if they had more time they would spend it with their family or in leisure activities. Many of these lawyers expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the time demands of practicing law in terms of both the quantity and unpredictability of the hours required. The time demands of practicing law are also a major source of stress in their lives.

Combining Work and Family

The time demands and priority attached to practicing law often interfere with lawyers' family time. Lawyers in this study are generally dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend with their spouse and/or children and they often feel they are too tired to enjoy the time they are able to spend together. A general concern raised by many of the lawyers is the difficulty for women in combining both a successful career and a balanced family life. While some women attempt to combine both a full-time career in law and raising a family, other women attempt to balance work and family by working reduced hours. Most of the women surveyed rely on a nanny to provide care for their children while they are at work. Many of the men in this study have a wife who does not have a full-time career and who stays at home to care for their children.

The Division of Household Tasks

Lawyers were asked to indicate who performs specific household tasks around the house. The division of household tasks appears to be fairly traditional where wives tend to do the "female tasks" and husbands tend to do the "male tasks." This allocation of tasks tends to be reinforced by the use of paid help. From their responses it appears that wives, whether they are female lawyers or the wives of male lawyers, appear to be responsible for the burden of housework. While about half of the spouses feel the division of housework is fair between them and their partner, one-third feel the women do more than what is fair.

Coping With Stress

Lawyers were asked to identify the major sources of stress in their lives and the ways they cope with these stresses. Most lawyers reported experiencing considerable stress both recently and over the past year, and about half indicated that most of their stress was primarily due to work. Several different coping strategies were identified by lawyers in this study. For example, many lawyers surveyed indicated that they often turn to their spouse and family for support when they are coping with the stresses they encounter in their day-to-day lives and to their spouse and other lawyers when they are dealing specifically with work-related stress. Lawyers' spouses are often helpful in coping with the stresses of the job by providing

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emotional support (i.e., by listening and offering support and encouragement) and/or informational support (i.e., by offering helpful advice and suggestions, often because they are also lawyers and also understand). Other lawyers also indicated in their comments that they attempt to keep their work in perspective and recognize the more important priorities in their life. Others try to place limits on their work time so it does not take over their entire life.

Temporary Absences From Law

Lawyers were asked whether they have taken any significant breaks or time off since they first started practicing law. The purpose of the inquiry was to determine if lawyers were using such breaks as a coping strategy to relieve the stresses of practicing law and if so, whether the strategy was effective. If they had taken a leave they were asked the reason for their leave and whether they felt they were treated any differently upon their return. The findings of this stage of the study suggest that men and women take temporary leaves for different reasons and they experience different treatment following their return to work.

Part-time vs. Full-time Work Arrangements

Lawyers were asked to describe their work hours and work arrangements. Recent studies have indicated that while male lawyers seldom work reduced hours, some female lawyers adapt their work hours to meet the demands of their family. The results of this study support this research. Of the 21 lawyers contacted who were working reduced hours or part time, all are women. These women generally left full-time practice to work part time to have more time for their children.

An interesting finding of this study is that women working part time report spending significantly less free time in leisure activities and less free time alone with their spouse than male and female lawyers working full time.

Alternatives to Traditional Law Firm Practice

Participants were asked whether they think they will continue to practice law as they do now in their current job or whether they might change jobs in the near future. Lawyers' answers to this question show an interesting finding in that many law firm lawyers regard in-house practice as an attractive alternative to their current situation. Moreover, the lawyers practicing in-house or in government offices support this view.

The New Generation of Lawyers

Many junior lawyers voiced their opinions regarding the time demands and expectations of practicing law, and their comments have been presented throughout this report. A common theme appears to be that they are not sure they will, and in some cases they indicate they are unwilling to, continue to work the hours that they are currently working.

Satisfaction With and Commitment to Practicing Law

As a broad question, lawyers were asked to indicate their overall satisfaction with their careers in law. Despite the reports of the excessive time demands and stresses associated with practicing law, most lawyers are generally satisfied with their legal careers. Furthermore, most intend to continue working in their current employment situation and many would likely continue practicing law if they were financially independent.

Introduction

Lawyer surveys show that the time demands associated with practicing law and the difficulties encountered in attempting to balance work and family are major sources of stress and dissatisfaction in the legal profession and often times responsible for lawyers leaving the practice of law (Brockman, 1994; Hagan & Kay, 1995; Wallace, 1994, 1999b). Although it has been documented that significant numbers of lawyers are dissatisfied with the practice of law and are leaving the legal profession (Kay, 1997), little research has examined the specific sources of stress and dissatisfaction that lawyers encounter on a day-to-day basis. In this study, I set out to document the amount of time lawyers spend working, their home life and family situations, how they meet their housework responsibilities and child care needs, how they spend their leisure time, how stressful they perceive their lives to be and why, who they turn to for support, and their overall satisfaction with and commitment to the practice of law. In doing so, the results of this study provide an in-depth look into the stresses and demands lawyers face, and how they juggle their legal careers and their private lives.

This report summarizes information collected from 121 lawyers who agreed to participate in telephone interviews, which represents Stage One of a two-stage project. Stage Two of the project will be conducted next and will involve a large-scale, mail-out questionnaire. This questionnaire will be used to examine the issues identified by the results of Stage One in a more quantitative and representative fashion.

This report of the Stage One findings is organized as follows: First, the methods used are briefly described. Next, the sample of respondents who participated is described. Following this, the results of the interviews are presented. The findings are divided into the following sections: First, the time that lawyers spend working is examined by the hours they work at the office and at home, as well as their use of vacation time and temporary leaves of absence. Second, in the section on lawyers' home time, their family situation, their spouse's employment status and work hours, and how married couples use paid help and divide household tasks are examined. Third, the time married lawyers and their spouses spend with their children is presented, and the different child care arrangements they use are documented. Fourth, how lawyers spend their leisure time is examined by how much leisure time they have, what they do in their free time, and who they spend it with. Fifth, specific sources of work and family stress and support are identified, and the extent to which lawyers' spouses are helpful in coping with the stress of their jobs is examined in detail. Sixth, lawyers' satisfaction with and commitment to the practice of law is presented. Lastly, the report closes with comments made by participants at the end of the telephone interviews and the conclusions of this report.

Study Description

A snowball sampling technique was used to construct a sampling frame for this study. First, a list of practicing lawyers in the City of Calgary was developed from contacts in the profession. After each interview, participants were asked if they could provide the names and telephone numbers of other lawyers who they thought might participate in the study. Initially, 100 interviews were proposed, with an equal split of men and women. In order to obtain a better representation of lawyers in alternate work arrangements, slightly more interviews were conducted than initially proposed. Using this strategy, 129 lawyers were contacted and 121 agreed to participate in the telephone interview yielding a 94% response rate. This resulted in a sample of 56 men and 65 women with 32% of the women (N = 21) working part time.

Potential respondents were contacted at their place of work and interviews were scheduled at times most convenient for them. Interviews were conducted from mid-September until mid-November of 1999. Most interviews were conducted during work hours between 7:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. Some were also conducted later in the evening during the week (between 7:00 P.M. and 10:30 P.M.) or during the day on the weekends. The telephone interviews ranged in length from 20 to 75 minutes, averaging about 35 minutes in duration. The interviews consisted of both open-ended and multiple choice questions, and respondents were asked to describe their work and home demands and how they cope with them. Appendix A contains a copy of the interview schedule.

In the sections that follow, some findings are presented in a numerical form involving percentages or means. Other findings are displayed as quotes that are used to illustrate various themes that were identified from the more open-ended questions in the interview. It is important to note that the presentation of these quotes is not exhaustive since not all of the lawyers' responses are presented. As well, the number of quotes presented should not be interpreted as representative of the proportion of lawyers holding such views. Rather, specific quotes were selected because they best reflect a particular theme or they best capture the opinions and sentiments that lawyers conveyed in their interviews. In some cases it was necessary to edit comments to protect the anonymity of participants. Edited sections are indicated by the symbols ... and [ ].

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Sample Description

The 121 lawyers who participated in the telephone interviews have the following characteristics: Slightly more than half the respondents (53%) are female. The sample varies greatly in terms of their ages and the amount of law experience they possess. Some lawyers are as young as 27 years old and are in their first year of practicing law, whereas the most experienced lawyers are approximately 60 years old and have practiced law for 30 years. On average, the lawyers in this sample are 38 years of age and have practiced for approximately 10 years.

Table 1 shows where study participants were employed at the time of the interviews. The results show that, overall, the majority of women and men (67%) who participated in this study work in law firms. The results are broken down by women working part time, women working full time, and men all of whom are working full time, as well as presented for the total sample. It is expected that male and female lawyers will experience different work and family stresses and cope with them in different ways. For example, part-time work arrangements are one strategy women use to attempt to balance and cope with the demands of career and family, especially when their children are young (Chambers, 1989; Hagan & Kay, 1995; Epstein, Seron, Oglensky & Saute, 1999). Therefore, throughout the report comparisons are made among female lawyers working part time, female lawyers working full time, and male lawyers working full time. It should be noted that none of the men interviewed for this study works part time, and none of the study participants referred the name of any men working part time.

TABLE 1
Lawyers' places of employment

Work Settings	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)	Total Sample
Associate in law firm	40%	43%	28%	36%
Partner in law firm	5%	32%	39%	31%
In-House counsel in corporation	25%	11%	13%	14%
Government lawyer	0%	9%	13%	9%
Independent practitioner in association with others	10%	2%	7%	6%
Counsel—law firm	20%	2%	0%	4%

When comparing where men and women work by work status, almost half of the men (39%) are partners and one-quarter are associates (28%). In contrast, almost half of the women in this study, regardless of whether they work part time (40%) or full time (43%) are associates in law firms. While one-third of the women working full time are partners (32%), only 5% of the women working part time are. Approximately twice as many of the women working part time are in-house counsel in corporations (25%) compared to the women (11%) and men (13%) working full time. Women working part time in this sample are also more likely to be independent practitioners working in associations with other independent practitioners or counsel in law firms than male and female lawyers working full time.

Results and Discussion: Work Time

The results presented in this section examine lawyers' work time in a number of different ways. First, the amount of time lawyers spend working on a weekly basis is analyzed in terms of their work hours at the office and at home, during the evenings, and on weekends. Second, the amount of time lawyers spend on annual vacation is examined. Following this, the extent to which lawyers take extended leaves and the reasons they take them are presented.

Work Hours

The lawyers in this study work, on average, about 50 hours a week at the office. Approximately half (52%) take work home with them and they typically work another 5½ hours at home. Overall, the lawyers who participated in this study work 53 hours a week including time they work at the office, additional time they work during evenings and weekends, and work they take home.

Table 2 shows the number of hours that men and women working full time and part -time work at the office and at home in a typical week. It is interesting to note that the range in hours worked per week varies dramatically both within and across each group of lawyers. The results show that women (mean = 53½ hours) and men (mean = 52¼ hours) working full time tend to work similar hours in an average week, and

that women working part time tend to average 34 hours a week. It should be noted that in many jobs, 35 hours a week is considered working full time. As well, the frequency distributions (not shown) indicate that one quarter of the women working part time work 40 hours a week or more at the office.

TABLE 2
Total hours worked per week at the office and at home

Work Time Per Week	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Work time at office	34 hours (range = 16 to 53)	53½ hours (range = 35 to 82)	52¼ hours (range = 33 to 75)
Percent who work at home	65%	52%	46%
Work time at home	5½ hours	5½ hours	5½ hours
Total work hours	37½ hours	56½ hours	55 hours

In general, part time refers to any alternate to the full-time norm of 50 or more hours a week that may or may not involve an open-ended work schedule (Esptein, Saute, Oglensky, & Gever, 1995). That is, it includes all scheduling arrangements that limit the time worked by a lawyer by hours per day and days per week. In this study, the women working part time described themselves as working reduced hours, part time, or in a job share. Some of these women worked five days a week while others worked two, some had reduced quotas for billable hours set by the month or by the year, and others maintained a fairly regular work schedule that was limited by set hours.

Table 2 also shows that 65% of the women working part time usually work at home during the week compared to 52% of the women working full time and 46% of the men. Regardless of gender or work status, lawyers who take work home tend to work an additional 5½ hours a week on average.

Table 3 compares how many total hours lawyers work per week in the different work settings by gender and work status. The total work hours represents the number of hours worked at the office and at home. These comparisons are limited to associates and partners in law firms, and lawyers working in either government or corporations because of the small number of study participants who represent the other two groups (i.e., independent practitioners and counsel in law firms). Such small numbers make meaningful comparisons difficult and may threaten the anonymity of participants.

TABLE 3
Total hours worked per week at the office and at home by work setting

	Associates	Partners	Government	Corporation
Women: part time	36 hours	53 hours	——	32½ hours
Women: full time	63 hours	50 hours	57½ hours	48¼ hours
Men: full time	59¼ hours	56¼ hours	47½ hours	48½ hours

The results presented in Table 3 show that women working reduced hours as associates (mean = 36 hours) or in government (mean = 32½ hours) work the fewest hours on average of any group. Women working full time as associates (mean = 63 hours) or in government (mean = 57½ hours) appear to work slightly longer hours on average than men in these settings (mean = 59¼ hours for associates, 47½ hours for government lawyers). While women working reduced hours as partners in law firms (mean = 53 hours) appear to work about the same hours as women working full time as partners in law firms (mean = 50 hours), it is important to note that this comparison is based on a small number of cases where only 5% of the women working part time are partners in law firms (see Table 1).

On average, the lawyers in this study start work at about 8:00 in the morning and they typically leave work by about 6:00 in the evening. The hours they work vary considerably, however, in that some lawyers report being at work usually by 6:00 in the morning while others may start work as late as 9:30. Similarly, some lawyers leave work as early as 4:00 in the afternoon while others often work as late as 9:00 in the evening. Table 4 shows how the hours that lawyers keep vary by gender and work status. Regardless of their work status or gender, lawyers tend to start work at around 8:00 in the morning. There appears to be considerably more variation, however, in terms of when lawyers leave work. Women working reduced hours tend to leave shortly after 5:00, male lawyers tend to leave around 6:00 and women working full time leave the latest, around 6:30 on average.

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TABLE 4
Time lawyers arrive at and leave work

	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Arrive at work	Mean = 8:15 A.M. Range = 6:00 to 9:30	Mean = 8:00 A.M. Range = 6:00 to 9:30	Mean = 7:45 A.M. Range = 6:00 to 9:00
Leave work	Mean = 5:15 P.M. Range = 4:00 to 7:00	Mean = 6:30 P.M. Range = 4:00 to 8:30	Mean = 6:00 P.M. Range = 4:00 to 9:00

More than half of the lawyers (60%) report working at least one evening a week and, on average, they work between one and two evenings in a typical week. Some lawyers typically work in the evenings at home and others work evenings at the office. Those who work at the office may stay late and work through the dinner hour or leave work and return to work later in the evening. Table 5 shows that women working full time (68%) are most likely to work evenings, followed by men (59%) and women working reduced hours (40%). Both groups of women tend to work about two evenings a week, whereas men usually work two or three evenings. Men and women working full time work between five and six hours a week in the evenings, compared to four and a half hours for women working part time.

TABLE 5
Amount of time lawyers work in the evenings

Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
40% work evenings for 2 evenings a week for 4½ hours a week	68% work evenings for 2 evenings a week for 5¾ hours a week	59% work evenings for 2 to 3 evenings a week for 5½ hours a week

Overall, more than half of the lawyers (57%) work on the weekends where they typically work an additional five hours a week during this time. Most lawyers typically work at the office when they work during the weekend. Table 6 shows that women working full time are the most likely to regularly work weekends (73%) whereas women working part time are least likely (15%). Men and women working full time who regularly work weekends tend to work an additional five hours on the weekend and women working reduced hours tend to work an additional four hours.

TABLE 6
Amount of time lawyers work on the weekends

Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
15% work weekends for 4 hours	73% work weekends for 5 hours	61% work weekends for 5 hours

When asked why they work the hours that they do, the majority of lawyers (81%) feel they have to work these hours as a result of pressures that come from a combination of sources, such as their employers, partners, or clients. These findings are consistent with a recent study examining why lawyers work the hours that they do. Wallace (1997) found that lawyers' work hours were determined by overwhelming work pressures, where lawyers feel they do not have enough time to meet the demands of their job and that they have an excessive workload, and by internal pressures that lawyers place on themselves because of the salience that they attach to their work role. A small proportion of lawyers (17%) feel they choose to work the hours that they do. In addition, the women working part time expressed their feelings about the trade-off of working part time and why they often work additional hours outside their reduced office hours. Table 7 presents some of the lawyers' explanations in their own words as to why they work the hours that they do.

TABLE 7
Reasons why lawyers work the hours that they do

Combination of Pressures
"It primarily relates to volume and rapid response and intense timeliness."
"I ha e to – I guess from two sides. There's the professional responsibility to keep your clients serviced properly and there's meeting the billing demands of the firm."
"I have to work the hours because of the demands of the job a id the nature of the beast. The demand comes from the volume. In part, it's the sheer volume of the actual legal work that has to be done and the work entailed in running a law firm. A lot of the work I do, a significant part, is related to firm administrative matters."
"In my case, it's simply the client demands and I guess the good news is that I have a thriving practice and a lot of work coming in at a steady pace, but the bad news is it's like shoveling out the ocean."
"...generally, it's not a huge problem when you arrive, I don't get a sense that everyone feels they have to be here by a certain time. I have heard senior lawyers commenting on junior lawyers' hours though. They'll say things like 'I came to your office at 7:00, whether it's am or pm, and you weren't there.' And you need to get them in, the hours. Even if I've put in a lot of billable hours by 5:00, I don't feel I can leave before 5:30 or 6:00. I don't feel comfortable in leaving earlier than that in case I bump into a senior lawyer on the way out. I get the sense that the senior lawyers don't work as hard in some firms and the senior lawyers impose hours on the junior lawyers that they don't do themselves, but I don't think that happens here."
"In a sense if I don't work the hours over the long term I won't have a job. There's a bit of leeway in the short term and in the long term there's a certain expectation that has to be met. The pressure is from the clients and the service we have to provide. The work has to be done by a particular time. And it's a whole other story as to whether its lawyers who have put themselves in a huge box now because to meet clients' needs they have to say they're a 24-hour shop. That means they'll get the work done in any time no matter how unreasonable the time demand. There's a lot of lawyers out there now and they have to be extremely competitive and conscious of clients' needs. So have we all put ourselves in this mess? I think, sure we have."
Self Imposed
"I definitely have to but in a way you choose to by choosing the job."
"I perceive it as a good sign that I'm very busy and I'm success oriented. It's good to be busy, not great for your lifestyle of course. I see it as a sign of success, pathetic I know."
"I think it depends on the type of person you are, I feel that I have to, but again it's almost a self-imposed thing and I want to do it properly and I'm not prepared to do only half and not do the other half and there are some people more able to do that. I guess whether it's self imposed or not, I feel I have to."
"I don't have anyone saying I have to be in so I choose to, but I have so much work to do. In large part it's work I choose to take on."
"If you're a partner at a big firm you work these hours period. You choose to work these hours and that's the bottom line. There's no use kidding people, let alone myself."
"My perspective is that everything is a choice. The expectations are high but I choose to live this life and work these hours. I chose to do this job and there's just no way you can do it effectively without doing the hours."
Part-time Trade Off
"I have to [work these hours]. It's a kind of a trade off that I have to be available at home at the days I'm not in the office."
"I have to work these hours. I guess I would work less if I could, but they wouldn't allow that from an economic standpoint because I take up a certain amount of overhead and below a certain level I'm not profitable enough."
"It's more of a combination. At times I have to, not the same 'have to' feeling you have at the law firm. There are real deadlines and it's to accommodate my clients and I think you need to be flexible in order to make part-time work."

Vacation Time

Overall, lawyers appear to be given approximately three to four weeks of paid vacation per year by their employer. Almost half take less than what they are allowed (45%) and they typically take two or three weeks instead. When the amount of vacation is compared by gender and work status, it appears that although men are more likely to take their vacation, they do not take the most vacation time. As noted in Table 8, the women working reduced hours, who do take time off, take 20 days on average compared to the men and women working full time who take about 14 or 15 days, respectively.

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TABLE 8
Amount of vacation time taken last year

Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
80% took vacation last year Mean = 20 days last year	86% took vacation last year Mean = 15 days last year	100% took vacation last year Mean = 14 days last year

When the amount of vacation taken is compared across the different work settings (results not shown), it appears that associates in law firms take the least amount of vacation time (11 days) and 14% report taking none in the last year. In contrast, partners in law firms take the most number of vacation days (17 days) and almost half (43%) report taking three or more weeks off in the last year. The majority of government (15 days) and corporate lawyers (13 days) appear to have taken about three weeks of vacation.

The most popular reasons for not taking all of one's vacation include: the time demands of the job (e.g., being too busy or unable to take vacation to meet billing standards) (56%); vacations are too difficult to schedule and coordinate (19%); they have recently taken a leave for other reasons (e.g., maternity leave, health leave) (14%); or they have started working in their current job in the last year (11%). The quotations presented in Table 9 illustrate the obstacles lawyers face in taking their vacation time because of the time demands of their jobs and the difficulties associated with scheduling and coordinating vacation time.

TABLE 9
Reasons for not taking all of one's vacation

Time Demands
"I don't know what we're allowed, a month or so I think, and I took a week. Purely because all that really matters is billable hours and there's too much work to do."
"A combination of things, being busy and the appearance as well."
"I guess timing, when to do it and not enough time to do it."
"There's no set amount of time. I have a target to meet and a threshold over which I get rewarded. I think it's about three or four weeks. You take whatever time off you can afford. I tend to take about half of it. I'm too busy and can't afford the time. For every week you take off, you lose a week of billings and I have two kids, wife and two mortgages—and they take time."
Difficulties in Scheduling and Coordinating
"A combination of things going on here at work and you push your holidays back. You're half way through the year and you have half your holidays left. You want to save the holidays until later and then you're not able to take them because work catches up."
"They say you can take as much as you want, I think ... I find when I take any time off you exhaust yourself trying to get out of the office and closing up your files and then I get back from the holidays and I lose time getting back and trying to readjust to the office, and there's always the pressure for hours and I've always had trouble with that."
"My husband is very busy too, so we both just work, that's what we do. It's very difficult in private practice to get away. You work very hard to take a week off and twice as hard when you get back. It's more time consuming to take time off in a stretch than to leave earlier now and then."
"I'm not sure what we're allowed. I think it's six weeks. Last year I probably took two weeks."
"I would never make my hours if I took that much vacation. I don't take the long vacations but I don't work the longer days that other people do, and you have to do one or the other. It's also difficult because I have a practice with hundreds of small files so it's very time intensive to farm those out and even do a memo on where all my files are. I may take shorter vacations, for three or four days at a time. Part of it's just the money. I have two kids and we just haven't been able to afford really big, long, go-far-away vacations. So I'll take time off work and work at home for the day or I'll take a few days off and work around the house fixing things up."
"Scheduling conflict. Court cases were set down in times that I blocked off for my holidays so I just had to cancel my holidays."

Temporary Leaves From the Practice of Law

One-third of the sample (33%) has taken a significant break from practicing law since they were first called to the Bar. Of the 40 lawyers who have taken a temporary leave from the practice of law, 83% are women. Of these 33 women, 70% reported taking one or more maternity leaves. Other reasons included health, continuing postsecondary education, sabbaticals, travel, being seconded, or taking a job outside of law. Only seven men (12%) reported taking a significant break from practicing law, and all but one appears to involve upgrading one's skills (e.g., continuing education or a sabbatical).

Respondents who reported taking a significant break from law were asked to indicate whether they felt they were treated any differently when they returned. Six of the seven men (86%) reported that they felt they were treated the same as before and the seventh reported that he did not return to the same place of work. Of the women, 40% reported that they felt they were treated the same and about one-quarter (21%) reported that they did not return to the same place of employment. The women who took a leave for health reasons reported that they felt their coworkers were more sensitive to their health upon their return. Of the 23 women who took a maternity leave, approximately one-third felt they were treated the same by their colleagues upon their return, one-third felt their were treated differently (i.e., negatively), and one-third returned part time, which also resulted in being treated differently. Other studies have also reported that female lawyers who attempt to combine motherhood and work by using part-time or flex options often find that they are seen to be less committed to their careers, are given less important assignments and experience a stall in their careers, which is referred to as the "mommy track" experience (Epstein et al. 1999; Hagan & Kay, 1995). The comments presented in Table 10 illustrate how women returning from a maternity leave feel they were treated differently by their colleagues. Generally, these women feel that members of their firm viewed them as less committed to their career.

TABLE 10
How women feel they were treated differently returning from maternity leaves

"For sure by the partners. They'd bitch and complain about the fact that it [maternity leave] existed and it happened and how much trouble it was. And to some extent they're glad to have you back but they like to remind you how difficult it was for them."
"The first time I asked for an alternative work schedule, in the firm that I was with, there were only two women who had kids, never mind maternity leaves, so it was pretty unusual. So it was my request and it was dealing with their weirdness. But I worked four days a week for four years. It was pretty blatant though, like one guy said when I came back that 'you go and have a couple of kids and you no longer care about your career.' It was just like that. But I think it was perhaps more due to me working part time than simply having kids."
"I think they think that your dedication is different even though it isn't. You have to juggle more but that doesn't mean you're not dedicated to your job. You may have to run off to take your child in for an ear appointment and then work at home at night after the kids have gone to bed."
"In the one firm I changed my status to part time and basically my feeling is that I became invisible, like a eunuch, in terms of status. I was not eligible for partnership and it was even more pervasive than that. It's like you weren't on the team and you weren't given the same consideration as to the availability of work, and the good work and I was treated like a second class associate."

In summary, lawyers tend to work long hours at the office and at home. The women in this study who work part-time are also generally working long hours, and such hours would be considered full-time hours in most occupations. Most lawyers feel they have to work the hours that they do as a result of pressures from their employer, partners, or clients. Many sacrifice some of their vacation time due to the demands of their job or the difficulty of scheduling holidays around their work schedule. While some of the men took leaves to upgrade their legal skills, most of the women who took a leave of absence, took a maternity leave. The majority of these women felt they were treated differently upon their return to work. Many felt their colleagues regarded them as less committed to their career either because they had children or because they returned to their jobs part time.

Results and Discussion: Home Time

In addition to the stresses lawyers experience in their professional lives, different aspects of lawyers' home lives reflect other stresses they may face. Conversely, lawyers' families may also represent the coping strategies that they use in response to the stresses of practicing law. For example, in the case of married couples, it is important to take into account their spouse's work situation because dual career couples tend to experience more stress than those where only one spouse works full time (Hammer, Allen, & Grigsby, 1997). As well, the literature suggests that lawyers with small children may experience greater difficulties in balancing a career in law and their family life (Liefland, 1986; Stanford Law Project, 1982; Epstein, et. al. 1995). Responsibility for household chores with little help from one's spouse or the use of paid services (e.g., cleaning services) may also affect stress levels (Glass & Fujimoto, 1994).

In order to examine lawyers' home lives as sources of stress or support, lawyers were first asked to describe their marital and family situations. Married lawyers were also asked to indicate their spouse's work situation and the hours that they usually work. Following this, the ways in which lawyers use paid help and divide household tasks with their spouses were examined. Lawyers' responses to these questions are presented below.

Lawyers' Marital and Family Situations

Most of the lawyers in this study are married or living as common law couples (83%), and a small proportion of these are remarried. The remaining lawyers do not have a partner at this time and are either single (never been married) (11%) or separated/divorced (6%). Table 11 shows that fewer of the women working full time are married, compared to the other two groups, and they have been married the shortest amount of time. These findings are consistent with much of the literature that suggests that women working in full-time professional careers are less likely to be married or they tend to be married later (Epstein et al. 1995; Hagan & Kay, 1995).

Slightly more than half (57%) of the lawyers report that they have children living with them at home. Table 11 shows that almost all the women working part time (90%) have children living at home and the majority of these mothers (72%) have one or more children who are preschool aged. In contrast, only one third of the women working full time (35%) have children and half of them (50%) have one or more preschool-aged children. Most of the men are married (89%) and slightly more than half have children at home (61%) and half of these report they have preschool aged children (53%). This pattern of findings is also consistent with the literature that shows that female lawyers working full time tend to have fewer children than other women and higher rates of childlessness (Epstein et al. 1995; Hagan & Kay, 1995).

TABLE 11
Marital and family situations

Family Situation	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Married/common law	90% married	73% married	89% married
Years married	12 years	7½ years	10 years
Percent have children at home	90%	35%	61%
Number of children	2	2	2
Average age of children	5½ years old	7½ years old	8 years old
Percent with child(ren) under 6 years	72%	50%	53%

Table 12 shows the work situation of lawyers' spouses by gender and work status. Most of the spouses of married lawyers (87%) were employed at the time of the study. Whereas virtually all of the married women, regardless of their work status, have husbands who work full time, only half of the men (52%) appear to be in a dual-career situation where both spouses work full time. This pattern has been documented in other studies as well (e.g., Epstein et al. 1995; Hagan & Kay, 1995; Liefland, 1986) and when both partners work full time they tend to place a premium on time which often becomes their most scarce and valued resource (Harriman, 1982). One quarter (24%) of the male lawyers' wives work part time and one quarter (24%) report that their wife is unemployed. In both cases where the women report that their spouse is unemployed, their husbands are attending university full time. One of the men also reports that his wife is unemployed because she is attending university full time.

TABLE 12
Married lawyers' spouses' work situation

Spouse's Work Situation	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Spouse unemployed	6%	3%	24%
Spouse works part time	0%	0%	24%
Spouse works full time	94%	97%	52%
Spouse is a lawyer	44%	37%	16%

Table 12 also shows whether or not the married lawyers have a spouse who is also a lawyer. As shown in this table, women working both part time (44%) and full time (37%) are much more likely to be married to another lawyer than are the men (16%). Other research also reports that more female lawyers are married to lawyers than are male lawyers (Chambers, 1989; Schrimsher, 1998). Some have suggested that having a spouse who is also a lawyer may result in having a more supportive and understanding partner, whereas others have suggested that being married to another professional with an equally demanding career will act as another form of stress (Epstein et al. 1995; Wallace, 1999a, 1999b). It is interesting to note that later in the report, the findings suggest that lawyers who are married to another lawyer find their spouses very supportive and helpful in coping with the stresses of their job.

Table 13 shows the work hours of married lawyers' spouses. The results show that, on average, female lawyers' husbands work about 50 hours a week regardless of their work status. In contrast, the male lawyers' wives who work tend to work less than 40 hours a week on average. The husbands of female lawyers who work part time tend to be more likely to work evenings (53%) than weekends (18%). Approximately one-third of the women working full time report that their husbands work evenings (35%) and/or weekends (38%). About half of the male lawyers' wives who work also work evenings (47%) and one third (31%) regularly work weekends.

TABLE 13
Married lawyers' spouses' work hours

Spouse's Work Hours	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Office hours per week	51 hours	52¼ hours	38½ hours
Regularly work evenings	53%	35%	47%
Regularly work weekends	18%	38%	31%

Table 2 on page five shows the hours lawyers work per week at the office and at home. Together the results in Tables 2 and 13 suggest that female lawyers working full time and their husbands appear to represent dual-career couples where both partners are working full time at 50 hours a week or more. In contrast, half the couples in which one partner is a male lawyer working full time may be characterized as dual career couples where both partners work full time.

The Division of Housework

Recent evidence suggests that highly paid professionals tend to rely on paid services, such as house cleaning, as a way of relieving some of their household demands (Hochschild, 1989; Oropesa, 1993; Spitze, 1999). Lawyers were asked to report whether they paid anyone to help out around the house either on an occasional or seasonal basis (e.g., yard work) or on a more regular, long term basis (e.g., house cleaning).

More than half of the lawyers (60%) reported that they paid someone to help out with some kind of task around the house. The most popular types of services acquired include:

- 38% have regular house cleaning services, usually on a weekly or biweekly basis;
- 31% have yard work or outdoor work done on a weekly (e.g., cutting the grass) or seasonal basis (e.g., spring and fall clean up, aerating);
- 23% have a part-time or full-time nanny who is responsible for child care and house cleaning;
- 8% have other miscellaneous services, such as services that clean windows, carpets or blinds; house painters; or dog walkers.

Table 14 shows how the distribution of paid services varies by lawyers' gender and work status. The results show that while virtually all of the women working part time (95%) have some form of paid help, approximately half of the women (59%) and men (46%) working full time do.

TABLE 14
Use of paid household assistance

Use of Paid Help	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Percent any paid help	95%	59%	46%
Types of services			
Nanny (includes cleaning)	43%	21%	11%
House cleaning service	23%	36%	49%
Yard work	27%	36%	29%
Other	7%	7%	11%

This table also shows the specific types of paid services that lawyers have. Almost half of the women working part time (43%) have a nanny compared with 21% of the women working full time and 11% of the men. Recall from Table 11, that 90% of the women working part time have children and most of these (72%) have preschool-aged children. It is important to note that nannies are generally expected to perform house cleaning tasks as well. When the percentages of lawyers who have a house cleaning service or a nanny are combined, 66% of the women working part time, 57% of the women working full time and 60% of the men have some form of paid assistance with cleaning the house. So while approximately 60% of all three groups have help with house cleaning tasks, what differs more dramatically across the three groups is who performs these tasks (e.g., a cleaning lady or a nanny).

Married lawyers were asked about the relative contribution that they and their partner make to some of the more time-consuming household tasks in order to get a sense of the division of household tasks between husbands and wives. For each task they were asked whether they always do it, they usually do it, they both do it equally, their spouse usually does it, their spouse always does it, or someone else is usually responsible. Due to the complexity of these findings, Table 15 compares 51 male and 50 female lawyers who were married at the time of the study, while not taking work status into account.

Starting with the traditionally female tasks, Table 15 shows that many women practicing law are largely responsible for these tasks or in some cases (e.g., cleaning up after meals and shopping) tend to share the responsibility with their partners. Almost half of the women (42%) report that they have someone who is primarily responsible for house cleaning and approximately one quarter (26%) have someone who is responsible for laundry. In both cases, fewer husbands appear to contribute either in terms of being primarily responsible or sharing the responsibility with their wives. Similarly, for the male lawyers, we see that the majority of their wives are primarily responsible for meal preparation (65%) and shopping (53%), and for almost half of the men, their wives do most of the laundry (47%) and house cleaning (43%). Many of the male lawyers, however, contribute to cleaning up after meals either solely (31%) or with their wives (45%). Fewer of the male lawyers have paid assistance for house cleaning (21%) or laundry (10%).

TABLE 15
Distribution of household tasks between married lawyers and their spouses

	Married Female Lawyers				Married Male Lawyers			
Household Task	She does it	They share	He does it	They hire	She does it	They share	He does it	They hire
Traditionally Female Tasks								
Meal preparation	48%	34%	14%	4%	65%	23%	10%	2%
Clean up after meals	40%	50%	6%	4%	21%	45%	31%	2%
House cleaning	32%	20%	6%	42%	43%	27%	8%	21%
Laundry	46%	24%	4%	26%	47%	37%	6%	10%
Shopping for household	38%	54%	6%	2%	53%	23%	20%	4%
Traditionally Male Tasks								
Home maintenance and repair	6%	18%	58%	18%	6%	8%	69%	18%
Car maintenance and repair	16%	36%	48%	0%	4%	23%	61%	12%
Outdoor work	6%	24%	42%	28%	8%	25%	47%	20%
Banking and paying bills	34%	35%	32%	0%	22%	31%	47%	0%

Note. "She/He does it" refers to whether the person usually or always does that task; "They share" refers to both partners sharing the task equally; "They hire" means that they usually pay someone outside the household to do the task.

This pattern of findings is consistent with other studies that also report that husbands are most likely to help out with cleaning up after meals, whereas preparing meals and doing laundry are typically their wives' responsibility (Twiggs, McQuillan, & Ferree, 1999). It is suggested that part of the reason the women are more responsible for meal preparation is because of their work hours. For example, married female lawyers who work part time are more likely to be home before their husbands, and the male lawyers' wives who work part time are also more likely to be home before their husbands.

Turning next to the traditionally male tasks, we see that about half of the female lawyers' husbands are primarily responsible for home repair (58%), car maintenance (48%), and outdoor work (42%). A similar pattern is observed between male lawyers and their wives (i.e., 69%, 61%, and 47%, respectively). It appears that when male tasks are hired out, fewer of the female lawyers contribute to these tasks. For example, female lawyers are least likely to be responsible for home maintenance and repair (6%) or outdoor work (6%), and these two tasks are most likely to be hired out (18% and 28%, respectively). Similar patterns are observed between male lawyers and their wives. These findings suggest that husbands, regardless of whether they are lawyers or married to lawyers, appear to be primarily responsible for the traditionally male tasks.

Taken together, it appears from the results in Table 15 that when married couples hire household assistance for female tasks (e.g., house cleaning and laundry) the husbands are relieved of contributing to these tasks. Also, it appears that when married couples hire assistance for the more male tasks of home repair and outdoor work, the wives are relieved of these tasks.

Table 16 shows the extent to which married male and female lawyers feel the division of household tasks is fair between them and their partners. After indicating who does what around the house (as shown in Table 15), respondents were asked to describe the fairness in the division of household tasks between them and their spouse. It is important to note that it was emphasized by the interviewer that fair does not necessarily mean an equal or 50-50 split of tasks. While the majority of both genders feel it is pretty fair for the two of them, it is interesting to see how men and women perceive the situation to be unfair. Approximately one-third of the married women (32%) feel they do a little or a lot more than what is fair, and one-third of the married men (32%) feel their wives do a little or a lot more than what is fair. Thus, one-third of married lawyers, regardless of their gender, feel the wives do more around the house than what is fair.

TABLE 16
Sense of fairness in division of tasks

Sense of Fairness	Married Women	Married Men
I do a little/lot more than fair	32%	10%
It's pretty fair for both of us	62%	58%
Spouse does a little/lot more	6%	32%

In summary, women working part time are more likely to have children at home, and their children are generally younger than those of the lawyers working full time. The husbands of both groups of female lawyers are likely to work full time, whereas only half of the male lawyers have a spouse who also works full time. Lawyers working part time tend to rely more on paid help, although the majority of all three groups (about 60%) have either a nanny or a paid cleaning service to help with the house cleaning. The division of household tasks is fairly traditional where wives tend to do the female tasks and husbands tend to do the male tasks. This allocation of tasks tends to be reinforced by the use of paid help. In general, it appears that female lawyers and the wives of male lawyers tend to be responsible for more household tasks and in both cases, about one third of the respondents feel that the wives do more than what was fair.

Results and Discussion: Child Time and Child Care

Child care demands have been reported to be a significant factor contributing to lawyers' stress and dissatisfaction with their careers. In particular, there are numerous reports that female lawyers are more likely to leave the practice of law because of the difficulties of simultaneously balancing the demands of their work and their child care needs (Brockman, 1994; Hagan & Kay, 1995; Wallace, 1994).

Participants were asked to indicate the number of children they have living at home with them and their ages. Slightly more than half of the study participants (57%) have one or more children living with them in their home. As noted in Table 16, almost all the women working part time have children at home (90%). In contrast, slightly more than half of the male lawyers (61%) and only one third of the women working full time (35%) have children. In addition, the majority of mothers working part time (72%) have one or more children who are preschool aged compared to half of the mothers (50%) and fathers (53%) working full time. Preschool-aged children tend to involve a greater commitment of time and energy on the part of working parents (Moen, 1982).

The findings presented below include only lawyers who are parents at the time of the study. First, the time lawyers and their spouses spend with their children is presented. In addition, their satisfaction with the amount and quality of time they spend with their children is discussed. Following this, the different child care arrangements that lawyers use are examined.

Time With Children

Table 17 shows the amount of time that lawyers report spending with their children, playing with them or taking care of them, on the days that they work. On average, it appears that male lawyers tend to spend about 2 hours a day and female lawyers, whether working part time or full time, spend about 3½ hours a day with their children on the days that they work.

Lawyers were also asked to estimate the number of hours their spouse spends with their children on the days that they work. On days that male lawyers are working, their wives spend, on average, 6¾ hours a day with their children. In contrast, on days that female lawyers are working, regardless of their work status, their husbands spend about 3 hours a day with the children. There is considerably more variation in the hours that male and female lawyers' spouses spend with their children in that female lawyers and their husbands spend more similar amounts of time with their children than male lawyers and their wives. These differences are likely due to the fact that virtually all of the female lawyers' husbands work full time compared to half of the male lawyers' wives.

TABLE 17
Time spent with children on work days

Time With Children	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Respondent's time with children	3½ hours	3½ hours	2 hours
Spouse's time with children	2¾ hours	3 hours	6¾ hours

Table 18 shows the degree to which lawyers are satisfied with the amount of time they spend with their children. Despite the finding reported above that female lawyers, regardless of their work status, spend similar amounts of time with their children on the days that they work, the majority of women working part time (72%) are satisfied with the amount of time they spend with their children whereas only 20% of the women working full time are.

TABLE 18
Satisfaction with amount of time spent with children

Degree of Satisfaction	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Very satisfied	11%	13%	13%
Somewhat satisfied	61%	7%	50%
Somewhat dissatisfied	28%	67%	31%
Very dissatisfied	0%	13%	6%

It is important to note that the findings reported in Table 17 show how much time lawyers (and their spouses) spend with their children *on days that the respondent works*. Women working less than five days a week likely spend more time with their children throughout the week. Thus, it is not surprising then that women working part time are so much more satisfied with the amount of time they spend with their children, overall. The majority of male lawyers (63%) are also satisfied with the amount of time they spend with their children.

Lawyers who indicated they were dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend with their children were asked to explain why they felt this way. The common theme throughout the responses is that parents feel they simply do not spend as much time with their children as they would like and this is primarily due to the time demands of practicing law. Respondents also indicated they would like to be home when their children come home from school, and others referred to how tired they are by the time they do make it home. Examples of these explanations are presented in Table 19.

TABLE 19
Why lawyers are dissatisfied with the amount of time spent with their children

Being Home After School
"Because I think they need me more than what I'm able to give them. I'd really like to be able to be there for my 8 year old when she gets home from school and she could tell me all about her day."
"There's only so many hours in a day and the best time to spend with kids is when they just get home from school and I just can't be there."
"This is the last one [child] so I'd love to be there at home when he'd be home from school. Now I'm feeling maybe it wouldn't be such a bad idea that I quit."
"Too Tired to Enjoy Time Together."
"Not enough time to spend with them and I'm always tired when I'm with them."
"I always wish I could spend more time with them. I try to cut back on the work I do so I can be more with my kids."
"The question that plagues all working mothers. A little dissatisfied. I spend as much time as I can."
"There's not enough time, especially because you're fatigued a lot and cranky."

Table 20 shows the degree of satisfaction that lawyers have with the quality of the time they spend with their children. Overall, most are satisfied. Approximately three quarters of the female lawyers working part time (78%) and full time (73%) are satisfied compared to 91% of the male lawyers.

TABLE 20
Satisfaction with quality of time spent with children

Degree of Satisfaction	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Very satisfied	39%	33%	44%
Somewhat satisfied	39%	40%	47%
Somewhat dissatisfied	17%	20%	6%
Very dissatisfied	5%	7%	3%

Lawyers who indicated they were dissatisfied with the quality of the time they spend with their children were asked to explain why they felt this way. Table 21 summarizes their responses and illustrates the themes that emerged from these explanations. Several different reasons for this dissatisfaction were cited by the participants. For example, parents feel they or their children are too tired by the time they spend time together at the end of the day to enjoy it. Others feel that the time they spend with their children is full of other activities (e.g., doing homework, running errands) such that they do not have enough quality time or play time with their children. A few parents also indicated that it is difficult to switch gears from working all day as a lawyer and then immediately stepping into the parental role upon arriving home.

TABLE 21
Why lawyers are dissatisfied with the amount of time spent with their children

Timing and Tiredness
"Often you're really tired and that's not real quality time."
"I'm fatigued so the time spent is probably not quality, it's just time."
"I don't feel like the quality of time I spend with them after work is the greatest. I'm tired, we're all cranky."
"There's not enough quality time. I see her at the end of the day when she's tired. It's still nice to see her, but she's tired."
"I would like to spend more, but it's one thing to talk about more time. It's really the timing not so much the time. When you get them at the waning hours from 5:00 to 8:00 at night, it's not the best time."
Other Tasks and Responsibilities
"When they started talking about quality time they'd say that you first had to be satisfied with your life before you could spend quality time with others. I have a very successful career and I enjoy my work but it's very stressful and exhausting. So, when I get home, I don't get out the craft projects at the kitchen table and organize things for the kids to do. When I get home we have time off, then we have dinner and then we have homework, and the homework is taking all the rest of the time during the week."
"When I spend time with them, it's getting them ready for school, it's push, push, push, get them home, get your homework done, get to bed. That's just life. On weekends, it's good. During the week, it's getting everyone to meet their obligations and responsibilities and finding the time to get everything done."
"We spend a lot of time doing homework and more task-related matters, and on a weekly basis I would like to change that. They go every second weekend with their father, sometimes three out of the four, and I wish I would have more free time, play time with them. And we have vacation with them but I'd like more time on a more continuous basis."
"Often in the evenings and on the weekends, I'm so exhausted from the practice of law and clients' demands I don't have the patience because I'm just too tired to deal with them. The quantity of time may be available to them but not the quality of time. Because we spend our time balancing things and juggling, running errands and spending time with the kids, the quality of time they get takes a hit and the time we spend exclusively with them. It's a constant juggling act for the two of us."
Switching Gears
"Inevitably what happens is it's hard to leave work behind, so you go home stressed and thinking about things and it's hard to turn mommy-lawyer, lawyer-mommy on and off."
"The quality of time, from a parental viewpoint, isn't great. I come home from a full day of work and have no time to switch gears."

Child Care Arrangements

Research has shown that professionals may relieve family pressures and demands by relying on external child care services (Pollock & Ramirez, 1995). As well, being satisfied with one's child care arrangements is important in reducing stress and enhancing one's job satisfaction and commitment to work (Chambers, 1989; Elman & Gilbert, 1984).

Table 22 shows the various child care arrangements that lawyers use. In the majority of the arrangements, lawyers' children are cared for in their own home by either a nanny or parent. According to Table 22, 80% of the women working part time have either a nanny (75%) or the other parent (5%) taking care of their children at home. Similarly, 77% of the women working full time have a nanny caring for their children at home.

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While 64% of the male lawyers also report their children are cared for at home, only 18% report they have a nanny. Almost half of the male lawyers (43%) report that their wives are at home with the children and 3% report a relative takes care of their children at home. Male lawyers are more likely to have child care arrangements that involve a parent because many of their wives do not work full time. In contrast, it has been suggested that female lawyers are more likely to enter the "nanny track" where their children spend the majority of their waking hours with a nanny or other caregiver in order to keep their careers on track (Pollock & Ramirez, 1995). Approximately one-fifth of the lawyers use arrangements that involve out-of-home care, such as day homes, after school care, day care, or babysitters.

TABLE 22
Child care arrangements at home and out of home

Child Care Arrangements	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
At Home:			
with nanny	75%	77%	18%
with other parent	5%	0%	43%
with relatives	0%	0%	3%
Out of Home at:			
Day home	5%	15%	10%
After school care	5%	0%	10%
Day care	5%	0%	8%
Babysitter	5%	0%	0%
Old enough to be on own	0%	8%	8%

Table 23 shows how satisfied lawyers are with the extent to which their child care arrangements allow them to meet the demands of their career and the quality of the care being provided to their children. Virtually all of the lawyers are satisfied in both regards, although women working full time seem the most satisfied overall.

TABLE 23
Satisfaction with child care arrangements

Satisfaction With Child Care Arrangements re:	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Meeting Demands of Career			
Very satisfied	77%	91%	58%
Somewhat satisfied	23%	9%	33%
Somewhat dissatisfied	0%	0%	9%
Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Care to Children			
Very satisfied	77%	91%	83%
Somewhat satisfied	23%	9%	17%
Somewhat dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%
Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%

Respondents were asked who tends to leave work most often to take care of their children, for example, if they are at home, if they are sick, or to take them to a medical or dental appointment. Table 24 shows who usually takes on this responsibility. In general, usually the mother, whether she is a lawyer or not, is responsible for taking care of their children's needs during work time. Virtually all of the female lawyers working part time (94%) appear to be largely responsible for such child care arrangements either on their own (82%) or with their nanny's assistance (12%). In contrast, one third of the women working full time report that they are usually responsible (36%) and another third report that they usually share this responsibility equally with their husbands (36%). Half of the male lawyers (50%) report that their wives are responsible for taking care of the children under such circumstances, which is consistent with the findings reported above that almost half (43%) indicated that their wives take care of the children at home. Almost one quarter of the men report that they are the one who usually leaves work most often (21%) and another quarter report that they share this responsibility equally with their wives (25%).

TABLE 24
Who leaves work most often to take care of children

Who Leaves Work Most Often	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Respondent	82%	36%	21%
Spouse	6%	18%	50%
Both equally	0%	36%	25%
Nanny	0%	9%	4%
Respondent and nanny	12%	0%	0%

Table 25 shows the extent to which lawyers experience difficulties with their child care arrangements if something unexpected comes up, for example if they and their partner have to work late. Approximately 90% of the women working full time and part time report they generally do not have difficulties with their child care arrangements compared to 68% of the men. It appears that the female lawyers experience considerably less difficulty with their child care arrangements and this may be because most have in-home care provided by nannies (see Table 32). The quotes presented in Table 26 illustrate how flexible nannies appear to be in terms of dealing with the unpredictable schedules of lawyers and their spouses.

TABLE 25
Any difficulties with arrangements if something unexpected comes up

Any Difficulty	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Yes	11%	13%	32%
No	89%	87%	68%

When participants were asked to describe what sort of arrangements they make when something unexpected comes up, four basic strategies appear to be used and these are illustrated in Table 26. As indicated above, nannies are often used to accommodate lawyers' work schedules. For other lawyers, they and their spouses attempt to work around each other's schedules or take advantage of the flexibility in one or the other's work hours in order to cope with unexpected situations. Family or friends are also relied on and at times children may be left on their own or with siblings when they are old enough.

TABLE 26
Alternate arrangements when something unexpected comes up

Child Care Provider
"We have a very flexible nanny who's very good about working overtime on short notice ..."
"Our nanny. We need her to be accessible to baby-sit in the evenings but it's not great for the kids and they're the ones who lose a lot or miss out."
"Our child care provider [nanny] is the most flexible human being alive and if I need to be there for a 7:30 meeting she keeps the kids."
"She's very accommodating. I didn't have a nanny for about 6 weeks and had immense problems trying to juggle everything. It's a huge expense, about $20,000 a year, but I couldn't do what I do without that support."
One Spouse or Both
"My wife always has a 4:30 quit time. If I can't get away she always can."
"My wife takes care of it."
"One of us works late and the other one takes work home."
"It's always an incredible balancing act, and if I'm prep- ring for a hearing and my wife has two calls come in and the kids have ballet ... when the kids were younger it was a real juggling act and we're past that now. Initially we see if there's some trade we could do—you stay for an hour and I'll go home and then you come home and I'll go back to the office. We usually try first to work it out within our family. Then, we'll check with either of our parents, then other family. If you gotta go home, you gotta go home. Sometimes I've gone back to work at 10:00 at night and she's done it too, and sometimes you just have to do it that way. "
"We typically work that out between the two of us, and we typically don't ask the nanny because she's been there all day. We usually ask my parents to come over."
"Usually it's me who has more flexibility or I'm assumed to have more flexibility and it's me who leaves or me or who takes them to doctors, which would be different if I wasn't self-employed. If I can't, then my husband or sometimes the nanny does."
"It's difficult to find someone to take care of them, and if the nanny's not available it's tough. I may come home and then go back or sometimes I get up in the middle of the night and work."
Friends or Family
"It's fine as long as it runs smoothly... It can be difficult to deal with unexpected things that come up. We end up calling someone we know and we can sort of impinge on them for a day or two and make arrangements as best we can. We have a cousin and a sister in town and in a REAL emergency they can step in and help us. We have our friends from various things we're involved in, too."
"Right now it's my mom. My parents moved here and before that I just worked with whatever babysitters I had. My first preference or option is to try and do it at home if I can. I have a lap top and I can work at home. If it has to be done here, I go home and get everyone settled and come back. Someone else then stays with them."
"We really hate to do it, and it has happened and he ends up being alone at home. This year has been difficult. Before, if something came up before, he had an older sister there. I don't like it but it happens once a month where he's alone for an evening."
"The kids are of an age where the two eldest are able to take care of the young one and the young one can be left alone for short periods of time."
"They're extraordinary [day home care givers]. They beg me to keep the kids for the weekend and if I have to work a little late, they're happy to keep them. I know that they will be a part of my children's lives into adulthood. I can't believe how lucky I am to have found them. If I'm late they're fine with that and they take the kids everywhere, like to Beavers and karate lessons, play school and swimming, it's like my kids have another family."

In summary, many of the lawyers are dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend with their children. They explained that they feel they simply do not spend enough time, that they would prefer to be home when their children arrive home from school, and that they are often too tired to enjoy spending time together. Most parents, however, feel generally satisfied with the quality of the time they spend with their children. Those who were dissatisfied were concerned about issues of timing and tiredness, other tasks and responsibilities that interfered with quality time, and the difficulty of switching gears from lawyer to parent upon arriving at home. Most lawyers have in-home care for their children where the female lawyers rely primarily on nannies and the male lawyers are more likely to have wives at home. Overall, they generally encounter few difficulties with their child care arrangements if something unexpected comes up.

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Results and Discussion: Leisure Time

In this section, findings are presented that show how much time lawyers spend in leisure activities, what they do in their free time, how much of this time they spend with their spouse if they are married and whether they spend any of their leisure time with people who are related to their work. Leisure time was defined as free time that they can spend as they like, and which does not include doing housework, running errands, caring for children, or sleeping. The literature suggests that spending time in leisure may serve to reduce feeling of stress and enhance one's overall well-being (Bergermaier, Borg, & Champoux, 1984; Small & Riley, 1990; Wiersma, 1994).

How Lawyers Spend Their Leisure Time

Respondents were asked to indicate how many days of the week they are able to enjoy some free time and to estimate the amount of time they spend in leisure in a typical week. On average, lawyers report that they are able to enjoy some leisure time four or five days of the week. Almost half (45%) report that they enjoy some leisure time every day of the week. In terms of the amount of time they spend in leisure activities in a typical week, lawyers in this study estimate that they spend approximately 16 hours a week in leisure. The amount varies significantly, however, where one-quarter of the lawyers report spending 9 or fewer hours a week and another quarter reports spending 20 or more hours.

Table 27 shows how the amount of leisure time varies by lawyers' gender and work status. This table shows that men and women working full time report spending about 17 hours a week in leisure time that is spread out over approximately five days of the week. In contrast, women working part time report that they spend about 11 hours a week in leisure activities that are spread out over four or five days of the week. This pattern of results is consistent with those reported elsewhere where women with young children, which the women working part time are the most likely to have, accommodate their family and professional lives by spending less time on social and leisure activities (Chambers, 1989). That is, while women working part time spend less time at work than lawyers working full time, this does not translate into more free time. Rather, their decision to work part time is so they can spend more time caring for their children, and they reduce both their work time and leisure time to be able to do so.

TABLE 27
Amount of leisure time per week

Amount of Leisure Time	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Leisure time per week	11 hours	17 hours	17 hours
Number of days per week	4 to 5 days	5 days	5 days

Lawyers were asked to report how they usually spend their leisure time. Each respondent identified, on average, three or four leisure activities and in total, the sample identified 56 different leisure activities. Almost half of the lawyers (43%) report that they spend some of their leisure time working out or going to the gym to exercise. Almost half (43%) report that they read in their leisure time. The next most popular activities reported by approximately one-quarter of the lawyers include socializing with friends (26%); watching television or videos (23%); and running or jogging (23%). The most popular activities represent both passive (e.g., reading, watching television) and active (e.g., working out, running) leisure activities.

Table 28 summarizes the results for the most popular activities and shows the percentage of respondents who listed that particular activity as a way in which they spend their leisure time. Starting first with active leisure, the results show that about half of the women, regardless of work status, work out or go the gym compared to about one-third (36%) of the men. In contrast, one-quarter of the men (27%) are involved in organized sports, whereas considerably fewer of the women are. Similar proportions of men and women report that they run/jog or play golf. Lawyers working full time are more likely to go hiking or skiing than women working part time, and both women who work full time and those who work part time are more likely to go walking than men.

Turning next to the passive leisure activities, many of the lawyers report that they read in their leisure time. Almost half of the women working full time (43%) report that they spend their leisure time socializing with friends and they are mostly likely to report that they go out to dinner (25%) or movies (16%) compared to the other two groups of lawyers. In contrast, one-quarter of the women working part time (25%) and 13% of the men report socializing with friends, and only 5% report going out to dinner as part of their leisure activities. Lawyers working full time appear to be more likely to watch television in their leisure time whereas more of the women working part time are more likely to enjoy relaxing at home.

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TABLE 28
Participation in leisure activities

Leisure Activities	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Active Leisure			
Working out or going to gym	50%	48%	36%
Running or jogging	20%	21%	25%
Playing organized sports	5%	9%	27%
Golfing	15%	11%	16%
Hiking	0%	11%	14%
Walking	15%	16%	7%
Skiing (downhill/cross-country)	5%	14%	16%
Cycling or mountain biking	0%	2%	18%
Passive Leisure			
Reading	40%	48%	37%
Socializing with friends	25%	43%	13%
Watching television or videos	10%	25%	27%
Spending time with kids	15%	9%	29%
Relaxing at home	20%	7%	11%
Going out to dinner	5%	23%	5%
Going to movies	5%	16%	9%

Note. Respondents could list up to five activities.

Lawyers were asked to indicate the extent to which they feel work prevents them from doing what they like to do, or spending time on their own doing the things that they enjoy. Table 29 summarizes their responses to this question. Women working full time are most likely to report that their work keeps them from spending time on themselves almost all of the times that they would like to (21%), whereas few of the women working part time (10%) and few of the men (9%) feel this way.

TABLE 29
How often work interferes with personal time

How often does work keep you from spending time that you would like to spend on yourself?	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Almost always	10%	21%	9%
Frequently	25%	23%	35%
About half of the time	10%	16%	14%
Occasionally	45%	29%	24%
Almost never	10%	11%	18%

Approximately one-third of the women working part time (35%) report that they frequently or almost always feel their work prevents them from doing something they would rather do for themselves. In contrast, almost half of the other two groups (44%) report they feel this way. Almost half of the women working part time (45%) report that this occasionally occurs compared to one third of the women working full time (29%) and one quarter of the men (24%). Several women working part time explained that it was not their work that was responsible for them not having enough time for themselves, but rather their family responsibilities.

Respondents were also asked if they worked fewer hours a week, what they would do with the extra time. The two most prominent responses were spending more time with their family (58%) and doing more active leisure, including exercising, playing golf, and other outdoor and recreational types of activities (59%). Table 30 shows the most popular ways that lawyers indicated they would like to spend their time, if they had more.

The findings in Table 30 show that most of the women working part time (80%) would like to spend more free time with their family if they could, compared to 63% of the men and 43% of the women working full time. It is interesting to note that most of the women working part time, who likely spend the most time with their children during the week, would still like to spend more. In contrast, more than half of the male (68%) and female (64%) lawyers working full time would like to spend more time in active leisure compared to only one-quarter of the women working part time (25%). Other notable patterns show that more women

working part time would like to spend more time on themselves (30%) and more time sleeping (15%) than either of the other two groups of lawyers. Similar proportions of both groups of women would like to spend more time socializing with friends. Approximately 10% of all three groups of lawyers would like to spend more time reading if they could.

TABLE 30
If they worked fewer hours, how lawyers would spend their time

If they could, they would spend more time ...	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
With family	80%	43%	63%
In active leisure activities	25%	64%	68%
On themselves	30%	16%	5%
Socializing with friends	15%	14%	5%
Reading	10%	11%	13%
Sleeping	15%	9%	2%
Working around the house	10%	11%	5%

Leisure Time With Spouse

Table 31 shows the amount of free time married lawyers report spending alone with their spouses (free time that is not doing housework, running errands, or taking care of children). The results show that the amount of time spent alone with one's spouse varies dramatically by lawyers' gender and work status. Generally, women working part time report spending hardly any or only some of their free time alone with their spouses, and they estimate that this averages less than four hours a week. Recall from Table 27, that women working part time reported the least amount of free time (11 hours a week) compared to men and women working full time (17 hours a week). In contrast, women working full time report they generally spend half or more of their leisure time alone with their spouses and this averages about 11½ hours a week. Men seem to spend more or less half of their leisure time with their wives and this averages about 9¼ hours a week.

TABLE 31
Amount of free time alone with spouse

Amount of Time	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Hardly any of it	33%	6%	16%
Some of it	44%	9%	28%
About half of it	17%	25%	20%
Most of it	6%	38%	30%
Almost all of it	5%	22%	6%
Average hours per week	3¾ hours	11½ hours	9¼ hours

Table 32 shows the extent to which married male and female lawyers are satisfied with the amount of time they spend alone with their spouses. The results show that approximately half of the women working reduced hours (55%) or full time (43%) and half of the men (56%) are somewhat or very dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend alone with their spouses.

TABLE 32
Satisfaction with time alone with spouse

Degree of Satisfaction	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Very satisfied	6%	13%	12%
Somewhat satisfied	39%	44%	32%
Somewhat dissatisfied	44%	34%	52%
Very dissatisfied	11%	9%	4%

When asked why they are dissatisfied with the time they spend with their spouses, most respondents indicated that it is because they do not feel they spend enough time with their partners. In many cases they feel this is due to the demands of their jobs, but they also often report it is due to the time demands associated with having children. Table 33 presents some of the lawyers' responses in their own words.

TABLE 33
Why lawyers are dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend with their spouses

Not Enough Time
"Just because we never get large chunks of time together, we just have no vacation or lots of time together so we just try and grab little bits here and there."
"I'm somewhat dissatisfied because our free time is catching up on stuff and talking about work. I hate talking about work, but that's what we do all day. It seems the law takes up all your free time even when you're not at work, and I find I'm thinking about it and worrying about it all the time, even at night when I'm not there."
"I just think that the important aspects of life are relationships and I need to foster the relationship with my wife. She's the one who will always be there for me and the firm won't be there if I have an emotional crisis or something I have to deal with. My wife will be, and yet they demand the lion share of my time."
"Because I don't think it's enough, never enough time."
"I'd like to spend more time but don't know how to do that."
Work and Family Demands
"It's a combination of having young children and trying to balance everything. The priorities are that the children come first and work is somewhere in between second and first, and the left over time just isn't there."
"That's something we're addressing. And it's through your priorities and for those of us who've gone this route you say your work is first, or your work and family come first, and you and your marriage are the distant followers and it's hard to turn that around."
"I'd like there to be more of it and the opportunity for us to do a greater variety of things but our leisure time comes at 9:00 or 9:30 so we're pretty house bound and the children are in bed and it's the end of the day."
"We nurture our careers and our family, and we need to do that more for our marriage (not that it's in trouble or anything because it's not) and to have that time alone when we have three kids — it doesn't work. We have time in the evenings after they go to bed and we have the drive to and from work and that's an hour each day, and it's time together and it's always very important to me because we can get a lot done in that time."
"Just because I don't think we do it enough and it's too easy to get caught up with all the stuff for the kids, and our relationship as husband and wife suffers because of it. It's really a question of tuning your mind to it and if you don't, you just forget to do it."
"Because I don't get enough time because of all the other pressures in our lives. It's not all because of work —it's kids really and it gets worse as they get older, they get more demanding."

Table 34 shows the extent to which lawyers are satisfied with the quality (rather than the quantity) of the time they spend alone with their spouses. While about half are dissatisfied with the *amount* of time they spend together, most are somewhat or very satisfied with the *quality* of the time they do get to spend together. Slightly more of the men (20%), however, are somewhat dissatisfied, followed by women working full time (16%) and those working part time (11%).

TABLE 34
Satisfaction with quality of time spent with spouse

Degree of Satisfaction	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Very satisfied	39%	31%	36%
Somewhat satisfied	50%	53%	44%
Somewhat dissatisfied	11%	16%	20%
Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%

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As indicated in Table 34, only a small percentage of each group of lawyers indicated they are at all dissatisfied with the quality of the time they spend with their spouses. Among those who are dissatisfied, a prevalent theme appears to be that one or both of the spouses are often too tired to enjoy spending their time together. Some of their explanations are presented in Table 35.

TABLE 35
Why lawyers are dissatisfied with the quality of the time spent with their spouses

"Because a lot of the time we're so exhausted we can't do anything."
"Mainly because we're both so tired. And we can only do one thing. It's not that we're not enjoying what we're doing, it's just that we have a limited choice of how many things we can do."
"Usually we're too tired and distracted with other things."
"Because I'm usually falling asleep."
"At night the kids are in bed at 8:00 and then we have time alone, but I usually clean the dishes and clean up."
"Just because of the life we're leading right now. Being a junior lawyer is pretty tough, whether it's the hours or the way you're treated. One of us is either exhausted or fed up by the end of the day, and you really don't want to talk about law anymore but if there's problems you have to talk about it. You just can't leave it at work and that may be the function of the fact that we're both lawyers."

Work-related Leisure Time

An exploratory aspect of this study was to examine the extent to which lawyers' leisure time involves people who are related to their work. An important aspect of career success often requires making contacts, securing clients, and developing social networks, which typically involve social activities outside of work hours (Seron & Ferris, 1995). Lawyers who are married or have family commitments may be less able or less willing to spend their leisure time in such social activities and as a result be somewhat disadvantaged in promoting their careers in this way.

Almost half of the respondents (45%) indicated that they often spend their leisure time with others who are related to their work. Of these, 65% reported these work-related people are other lawyers, some of whom are from their workplace and some of whom work elsewhere; 19% reported they are lawyers specifically from their workplace; 10% indicated they are clients; and 6% reported they include both clients and other lawyers. This suggests that for many lawyers some of their leisure time is work-related, and an important question is whether this time is truly leisure time or an extension of their work time.

Table 36 shows the percentage of lawyers who spend some of their leisure time with work-related people by gender and work status. Approximately half of the women (52%) and men (45%) working full time spend some of their leisure time with other lawyers or clients, compared to one-quarter of the women working part time (25%). Across all three groups, the majority of those who report they have work-related leisure time indicate that it is usually spent with other lawyers.

TABLE 36
Extent to which leisure time is spent with work-related people

Work-Related Leisure Time	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Percent who spend leisure time with work-related people	25%	52%	45%
Who are work-related people?			
Lawyers in and out of work	60%	65%	65%
Lawyers from work	0%	35%	9%
Clients	0%	0%	22%
Clients and lawyers	40%	0%	4%

In summary, women working part time appear to enjoy considerably less time in leisure compared to men and women working full time, and they spend significantly less of their free time alone with their spouses. Men and women working full time, however, are more likely to involve other lawyers or clients in their leisure activities than lawyers working part time. Lawyers appear to be involved in a wide range of leisure activities and if they could, many would like to spend more time with their family or in active leisure activities. Lawyers appear to be generally dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend alone with their

spouse in leisure activities, and they attribute this to the demands of their jobs and the demands associated with having children. Fewer are dissatisfied with the quality of the time they spend with their spouse, and those who are suggest this is because they are too tired to enjoy spending what little time they have together.

Results and Discussion: Stress and Coping

Most research tends to rely on multiple choice measures that ask respondents to report on the extent to which they have experienced certain preset stress conditions over an unspecified time period. Such approaches may not adequately capture the stress-related experiences that are relevant to a particular occupation or job (Narayanan, Menon, & Spector, 1999). Asking lawyers to describe, in their own words, what has been particularly stressful about the last two weeks or over the past year yields a more in-depth exploration of the specific stressors lawyers experience that may or may not be encountered at work.

In this section, the amount and source of stress lawyers have experienced in the short and long term are examined as well as the primary source of that stress. The potential for conflict between work and family is examined in terms of the extent to which lawyers feel their work interferes with their family time and their home life interferes with their work. Lawyers were also asked to identify the most important sources of support in their lives and, if married, how their spouses help them to cope with the stresses of their job.

Sources of Stress

Respondents were asked to indicate how much stress they experienced over the past two weeks and the source of that stress. Table 37 shows that about one-third of all three groups of lawyers feel that they have recently experienced a lot of stress and about one-half reported a moderate amount. Male lawyers are most likely to report little or no stress (25%) over the past two weeks, followed by women working full-time (16%) and women working part-time (5%).

This table also shows the primary sources of the stress that lawyers experienced over the two weeks prior to the interview. For all three groups, about half report that most of their stress was due to work and very few report that it was due to family. One-third of the women working part time (35%) report that the stress they experienced reflects a combination of work and family-related sources, whereas only 14% of the women working full-time and 11% of the men report this combination as the primary source of stress they experienced over the past two weeks.

TABLE 37
Amount and source of stress experienced over the past two weeks

	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Amount of Stress			
A lot	35%	36%	30%
A moderate amount	60%	48%	45%
A little	0%	14%	21%
Almost none	5%	2%	4%
Primary Source of Stress			
Mostly work related	50%	66%	62%
Combination of work and family	35%	14%	11%
Mostly family related	5%	7%	7%
Personal/health	5%	4%	0%
No stress	5%	9%	20%

Table 38 presents some of the lawyers' descriptions of the specific aspects of work that they found to be particularly stressful over the last two weeks. Four general work-related themes emerge from their responses: (1) certain aspects of firm pressures, such as to meet or bill target hours; (2) deadlines that are imposed by others especially when everyone views their matters as the most important, and lawyers have no control over when the deadlines are set; (3) specific files or clients when they are difficult to resolve, unexpected developments arise, or lawyers do not feel confident in what they are doing; and (4) dealing with other lawyers who are difficult or not helpful in teaching younger lawyers.

TABLE 38
Sources of work-related stress over the past two weeks

Firm Pressures
"The pressure to bill and the pressure to do good work. It's from the people I work with who are more senior to me and the clients I report to."
"Just the expectations. There's a lot of things, target hours, extracurricular involvement, firm socialization and all those things."
Workload and Deadlines
"It's just the nature of the profession. Deadlines. They come from having so many things to do, and everyone's particular matter is a priority in their eyes, of course."
"Work, just deadlines. You're always fighting deadlines, and I work in employment law and work with people who get fired. You get people calling and crying on the phone and I usually have a one or two week window to get their money for them, and you can't plan for them and when things are due."
Specific Files or Clients
"It's the same as it has been for 25 years and it's your files. Some are more difficult than others but you always have difficult files."
"Some negotiations that were stressful. I mean it was fun, but you had to be on your toes at the time."
"Odd problem files. For example, I work some in corporate commercial and real estate, and there were delays in completing transactions that were beyond my control and that's frustrating. You may have noticed that lawyers like being in control. [laughs]"
"I have a file I've been working on that's stressing me out and I don't know what I'm doing."
"The file I'm doing right now. For me, right now, it's the first time I'm doing something like this and I've been given a lot of responsibility on it and that's really stressful."

The themes identified from the lawyers' descriptions are consistent with many portrayals of lawyers' work as involving extremely long hours and feelings of being overwhelmed by time pressures and demands, in combination with the feeling that there is insufficient time to do one's job, all of which illustrate the all-encompassing nature of practicing law (Epstein et al., 1995; Kessler, 1997; Seron & Ferris, 1995; Wallace, 1997). They are also consistent with one of the predominant concerns in the literature on the legal profession as to whether the *practice* of law has become the *business* of law (Nelson & Trubek, 1992; Solomon, 1992). This trend is characterized by a shift away from a focus on helping clients as a service profession with collegial relations among lawyers to an emphasis on generating business and profit in an increasingly competitive atmosphere among members of the legal profession (Cooper & Humphreys, 1996; Galanter & Palay, 1991; Nelson, 1988).

Table 39 presents some of the lawyers' illustrations of how certain aspects of family life were stressful over the past two weeks. Four general themes were identified from the lawyers' responses: (1) feelings of guilt about not spending enough time with their children; (2) specific incidents involving their children (e.g., not making the team, trouble with the law, bad report cards); (3) general ongoing family stress (e.g., work-home transition, dealing with teenage children); and (4) a combination of family stresses (e.g., expecting a baby, home renovations, situations with child care providers).

TABLE 39
Sources of family-related stress over the past two weeks

Guilt About Not Spending Enough Time With Children
"Largely from work and also from guilt for not spending time with the kids ... Work—it's the stage a particular file is at, and there's the usual roller coaster of litigation."
"I haven't had a great week at work. It's been particular transactions that I've been working on and I've had to be here a lot and only spent about 20 minutes a day with the baby."
Specific Incidents With Children
"I had crises at home with my son and it's a team issue because he didn't make the right team and he was very upset about that. And at the office a really big deal that snowballed and I was very involved in it on Thursday and Friday and we were trying to get away for the weekend."
"I've had my share of anxiety—my son has been involved in some bad stuff and he's been getting in trouble with the law."
"Everywhere, my practice is a disaster, my son got a crappy report card and my husband has a big trial coming up so he's going to the planet litigation for a while."
"Today, with my son's kindergarten—kid/teacher relationships."
General Stress About Children/Family
"It's the transition from going from home to work and work to home—those are very stressful times. It's the feeding, getting everything ready on time, and getting them bundled up and out and then when I pick them up I have these tired, hungry kids. Those two transition times every day are really stressful. Work, that comes and goes."
"Family pressures and worrying about the kids. If you could see my face right now—I have cold sores everywhere, and they're the first signals of too much stress."
"My teenage daughter—she's a typical 16 year old kid. Her parents know nothing and she knows everything, and we have absolutely no role to play in her life than to feed her and clothe her."
Combination of Family/Home Incidents
"I think it's a combination of things on all fronts. We have a baby due any day, we have a renovation project that we have to get done before the baby arrives, we're living with my parents at age 38 during the renovations and I'm getting ready for trial."
"Work change stresses and some interpersonal conflict types of things and we're renovating our basement and that's stressful and there's been some school issue stress."
"The school busing isn't working well. The bus driver's kid hurt one of my kids and there's dissatisfaction with other things that were going on and it took two months to have them fired. A school bus driver should be able to drive a bus and my child does not get hurt. The kids were 45 minutes late for school and then they brought candy to buy off the kids. My nanny gets migraines and they manifest as paralysis and I'm managing that too. I have a nanny, and I know that's something, but when you're juggling it, it's stressful. I have to be the one to compensate for these things and I took her to the hospital, I called the neighbors and stayed all night at the hospital with her."
"I had to can my nanny at the same time my assistant was threatening to quit. It had nothing to do with me and was totally beyond my control."

Respondents were also asked to report how much stress they experienced over the past year and the source of this stress. Table 40 shows their responses to these questions. About half of the lawyers reported that they experienced a moderate amount of stress over the last year, and slightly less than half reported a lot of stress. The primary source for the majority of lawyers appears to be work related and one-quarter of both groups of women indicate that both work and family contributed to their stress over the last year. In contrast, only 11% of the men reported a combination of work and family as the source of stress. In addition, 15% of the women working part-time indicated that family-related issues were the primary source of stress over the last year, compared to 2% and 3% of the female and male lawyers working full time.

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TABLE 40
Amount and source of stress experienced over the last year

	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Amount of Stress			
A lot	40%	32%	44%
A moderate amount	50%	57%	42%
A little	5%	7%	15%
Almost none	0%	4%	0%
Primary Source of Stress			
Mostly work related	55%	64%	64%
Combination of work & family	25%	23%	11%
Mostly family related	15%	2%	3%
Personal/health	5%	0%	2%
No stress	0%	11%	20%

Respondents were asked to describe in more specific terms the source of the stress they experienced over the last year. Table 41 illustrates some of the work-related sources of stress that lawyers identified. These appear to form three broad groups: (1) workload and deadlines that may refer to the volume of work, meeting deadlines, the time-sensitive nature of practicing law and meeting others' expectations; (2) the lack of control lawyers feel over when work is due, the ebb and flow of practicing law which vacillates between low and high demands, and feelings they do not know what they are doing; and (3) the general nature of practicing law where lawyers refer to working too hard, lacking adequate support staff, not being able to resolve all files, or difficult clients.

TABLE 41
Sources of work-related stress over the past year

Workload and Deadlines
"It's just the amount of work. Sheer volume. Clients want a quick turnaround and they want it done absolutely perfect every time and there's a lot of clients out there."
"My job has a huge amount of things that have to be done right away. I do a lot of tight-rope walking and keeping very important people happy, and there's the stress of what goes on the in economy."
"I guess primarily balancing deadlines and dealing with stress when you're sleep deprived. It probably shouldn't be stressful, but when you're really tired, it is."
"It's just day in and day out and most of my work is pretty time sensitive."
"...the time pressures both in terms of urgency and the overall time commitment ..."
"Work and the demands of trying to keep a part-time schedule. You often feel you're working full time and paid part time."
"What makes this job stressful is not managing other people's expectations very well. You say you can get something done on Wednesday and it's not physically possible to do it."
Lack of Control Over Work
"From work and regular day-to-day things. I feel a lack of control over my work load, and it's imposed on you and not really invited. You don't have any control as a junior lawyer since you have no files. You come in at 8:00 and you don't know if you're going home at 5:00 or 10:00."
"The busy times—as an associate you really don't have control over when you'll be busy or not."
"My work is streaky at times—a lot of stress and then at times a moderate amount. I don't let myself get too wound up, but if I have a hearing, I work 90 hours in a week and that's the way it is and that's stressful... I enjoy it, but it creates stress because it telescopes the time you have for other things."
"It's in spurts. I don't know how you can get around that in this job and it's stressful. It has its peaks and valleys and I don't know how you get around that. And some clients are more stressful than others, and there's the demands on the your time and the files that suddenly become active and that have a crisis and you have to deal with them."
"The nature of my practice is that there're big peaks and valleys."
"Work in general and just being thrown in over your head."
"Work in general, not knowing what I'm doing, ever."
Nature of Practicing Law
"I usually go until I get sick or clinically depressed. I function at full tilt until I go off the deep end. A colleague of mine said to me once that in this business you have to always be bleeding a little bit or you're not able to function properly. It's like life is a series of linked recoveries, and you're always on the edge of falling off it and then you pull back a bit and then you're able to perform a bit better."
"I do reorganizations and so on ... The restructuring process did not go well and one big creditor made it impossible to make anything possible. My business is like 'Mr. Fix-It.' It's problem solving, and I wasn't able to solve the problem in any meaningful way, so that was really frustrating. The client and other lawyer involved were not great to deal with either."
"Mostly because the firm was breaking up, and there was a lot of uncertainty about where people would end up, and support staff were coming into my office and crying and not knowing what to do. And then there was the associate who killed himself ..."
"Difficult clients. They won't take your instructions mostly, they're unreasonable and difficult and also there's some stress at our partnership, otherwise things are going along pretty well."

The stress associated with workload and deadlines as discussed above is consistent with reports of other studies. Feelings of a lack of control over when it is busy at work and when work is due has also been documented as a key source of stress among professionals. Although professionals tend to have considerable flexibility and control over the hours of the day, they are often expected to put in whatever amount of time is necessary to get the job done thus making them feel they are always on the job and available for work (Seron & Ferris, 1995).

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Table 42 illustrates some of the lawyers' descriptions of more nonwork-related sources of stress that they experienced over the last year. These have been categorized as follows: (1) significant life changes that occurred over the past year, such as having a child, changing jobs and/or one's spouse changing jobs, and moving; (2) family illness or loss where the lawyer or their children, spouse, or parents have had a serious accident, or illness or passed away; (3) a combination of difficulties such as personal relationships, health issues, buying/building a house, and financial concerns.

TABLE 42
Sources of nonwork-related stress over the past year

Significant Life Changes
"We've had career changes, having to juggle a lot of different things and making big decisions. We both changed firms within a month of each other, we changed apartments, the situation with his family has been unstable and his niece is now being raised by his grandparents, and we get a lot of houseguests who never stop coming, even throughout all these things."
"Using the last year, it's not the best example of a typical year. I worked full time, had a baby, which really changes your life. I had to make child care arrangements, you have less time for yourself, and I changed my work arrangements to reduced hours and that's all reasonably stressful."
"A lot of stress because I changed jobs and I moved from [city] to [city] to Calgary in the last year. My boyfriend is the only person I can rely on in the city and the new job situation and it's a different firm with different rules about partnership ... My boyfriend works too long and he's always tired. We bicker a lot and I hate it. It's all pretty stressful and I'm starting to adapt. Oh yeah, and I hate the house we live in. It's a rental and it's falling apart and it's dusty everywhere."
"My husband has taken on a more high powered job and it was a big decision, but he's tremendously successful at it."
"Work and having a baby."
Family Illness/Loss
"The same sort of things and my daughter's accident ... in August."
"The cancer scare with my child. Work and while my child was sick and in the hospital. I missed a significant amount of work and I got behind and now that he's fine things are better."
"Work has been stressful. My parents have not been well, and I'm an only child, so I feel that's my responsibility. Having a child with [a specific disability] has a lot of stress and frustration. And, I'm just too busy to keep all the balls up in the air."
"My mother passed away and it was a long drawn out cancer affair and my two teenage daughters, if you can imagine, especially the 14 year old."
"Last fall I was ill, I developed [disease], and they thought I had [specific type of] cancer and that was a stressful time and my wife and I had some marital difficulties a year ago."
"Primarily work and stress in personal life and my father passed away last year."
"My marriage and my family, my mother suffered a stroke."
Combination of Factors
"Work, personal relationships, and we moved in January and building a house is stressful and my health, and issues with my wife."
"... My husband's had a really busy year and he's been out of town on trials, and my son is fast becoming a teenager, and it's not easy living with a 21 year old who thinks he's an adult but doesn't contribute in that fashion."
"Over the year it's been financial. We bought a house last year and with the house and the kids the budget is increasing faster than my revenue, and that at times has been stressful."
"Getting back into work and having three kids and having financial burdens."

A popular issue in the literature is the extent to which work and family demands conflict with one another, and previous studies have shown that work-family conflict is a major source of dissatisfaction for practicing lawyers (Brockman, 1994; Kaye, 1988; Wallace, 1994). Lawyers were asked to report the extent to which their work prevents them from spending time with their family (Table 43) and the extent to which their family life interferes with their work (Table 44). These results were computed for parents only, which is consistent with approaches in the literature that examine the extent to which work and family demands may conflict with one another.

The findings shown in Table 43 suggest that male and female lawyers who work full time are more likely to report that work invades their family time frequently or about half the time. In contrast, most of the women working part time indicate that their work invades their family time occasionally or almost never. This is not surprising given that lawyers working full time work more hours than lawyers working part time.

TABLE 43
How often work keeps lawyers from spending time with their families

How Often?	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Almost always	6%	8%	3%
Frequently	6%	42%	34%
About half of the time	6%	33%	16%
Occasionally	65%	8%	31%
Almost never	18%	8%	16%

Table 44 shows the extent to which lawyers feel their home life interferes with their work. The results suggest that the majority of the women working part time report this happens occasionally (47%) or more often (24%), whereas the majority of female (58%) and male lawyers (56%) working full time report this almost never occurs. A possible reason that women working part time report that their home life is more likely to interfere with their work is because they are more likely to have young children at home compared to lawyers working full time.

TABLE 44
How often lawyers' home life interferes with work

How Often?	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Almost always	0%	0%	0%
Frequently	18%	8%	3%
About half of the time	6%	0%	3%
Occasionally	47%	33%	37%
Almost never	29%	58%	56%

The pattern of results presented in these two tables illustrates the asymmetrically permeable boundaries between work and family roles. In other words, for men, work is more likely to intrude on their home time more than the reverse, whereas for women, the demands of family are permitted to intrude more on the work role than vice versa (Pleck, 1977). More recently, it has been suggested that women in full-time professional careers may adopt the "male career" model where their boundaries between work and family roles become more like men's. This appears to be the case for women working full time, whereas women working part time have clearly set limits on their work time and its likelihood of interfering with their family time.

Coping With Stress

Social support is generally viewed as an effective coping strategy that significantly reduces or alleviates the effects of stress (House & Kahn, 1985; Ganster, Fusilier & Mayes, 1986). Social support is often received from coworkers, family, or friends and may be offered in a variety of forms (e.g., emotional, instrumental, informational).

Respondents were asked to indicate the three most important sources of support in their lives when they are coping with life's ups and downs in general and when they are coping more specifically with work-related stress. Table 45 shows the different sources of support that lawyers use in dealing with the two different types of stress. In general terms, the same proportions of lawyers who are married feel that their spouses are an important source of support for them when dealing with life's ups and down. That is, essentially all of the married lawyers report their spouses are an important support in their lives. Similarly large proportions report that their families are also important in helping them to cope with life's ups and down. Considerably more of the women working full time (68%) report that lawyers in and out of work are also important sources of support. This finding is contrary to much of the literature that suggests that women tend to have fewer professional contacts or ties in male-dominated fields such as law (Esptein et al., 1995; Kay & Hagan, 1998).

TABLE 45
Sources of support in coping with stress

Sources of Support	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
For Life's Ups and Downs			
Spouse	85%	77%	87%
Family	85%	86%	78%
Lawyers (in and out of work)	40%	68%	43%
Friends (in and out of work)	50%	32%	36%
For Work-Related Stress			
Spouse	75%	71%	66%
Family	45%	27%	34%
Lawyers (in and out of work)	85%	100%	63%
Friends (in and out of work)	30%	23%	31%

When dealing specifically with work-related stress, most of the lawyers appear to rely on their spouse for support although these percentages are slightly less than those reported for coping with life's ups and downs. In addition, large proportions also rely on lawyers in and out of work as sources of support in dealing with work-related stress. More of the women working part time also report that other members of their family are also important sources of support for them.

In addition, married lawyers were specifically asked whether or not they talk about their work-related difficulties with their spouse to determine whether their spouse is an important source of support for them. Table 46 shows that the majority of female lawyers working part time (85%) and full time (75%) regularly talk to their husbands about the stress of their job compared to half of the male lawyers (54%). One-quarter of the male lawyers (26%) never talk to their wives about the stresses of their job compared to 15% of the women working part time and 16% of the women working full time.

TABLE 46
Whether married lawyers talk to their spouses about the stresses of their job

Talk About Work With Spouse?	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Always	85%	75%	54%
Sometimes	0%	9%	20%
Never	15%	16%	26%

Lawyers who indicated that they sometimes or never talk to their spouse about their work-related stress were asked to explain why. Table 47 summarizes their responses. A significant number of female (38%) and male (48%) lawyers working full time indicated that the reason they do not talk about their job stress with their spouse is because they do not want to take their work home with them. One-quarter of the female lawyers working full time also indicated that they do not want to upset their husbands by talking about their work difficulties, and approximately one-quarter of the male lawyers (28%) explained that due to confidentiality issues they do not feel comfortable talking about their work with their wives. The few women working part time who do not talk about their job stress with their husbands explained it is because their husbands do not want to hear about it.

TABLE 47
Why married lawyers do not talk about their job stress with their spouses

Why Not Talk About Job Stress With Spouse?	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Spouse doesn't want to hear about it	100%	12%	5%
Lawyer doesn't want to take work home	0%	38%	48%
Lawyer doesn't want to upset spouse	0%	26%	14%
Lawyer does not see as important	0%	12%	0%
Confidentiality of work	0%	12%	28%
Spouse cannot understand	0%	0%	5%

Lawyers who talked to their spouse about the stresses of their job were asked whether or not their spouse was helpful and supportive in coping with their work-related stress. Table 48 shows that the majority of lawyers feel that talking to their spouse is helpful in coping with their work stress.

TABLE 48
Is spouse supportive and helpful in dealing with job stress?

Is Spouse Supportive in Coping With Job Stress?	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Yes, usually	75%	78%	70%
Sometimes	5%	6%	8%
Not really	20%	16%	22%

Married lawyers were also asked to describe specifically how their spouse helps them cope with the stresses of their job. Table 49 summarizes the more popular responses to this question. More than half of the lawyers feel their spouse is a good listener or sounding board, and they find this helpful in coping with their job stress. Almost half of the women working full time (45%) and one quarter of the women working part time (24%) and the men (25%) report that the support and encouragement their spouse offers is helpful in coping with the stress of their job. About one-quarter of all the lawyers find that their spouse offers helpful suggestions or solutions. More of the part time (29%) and full time (30%) female lawyers indicated that because their husband is also a lawyer they find he understands the stresses of the job and only 16% of the men reported this. Recall from Table 12, however, that approximately 40% of the women are married to another lawyer compared to 16% of the men.

TABLE 49
How married lawyers' spouses are supportive in coping with job stress

Form of Supportiveness	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Good listener or sounding board	65%	56%	55%
Offers support & encouragement	24%	45%	25%
Offers suggestions or solutions	29%	26%	23%
Understands because a lawyer	29%	30%	16%

Note. Respondents could list more than one way that their spouse provides support.

Tables 50 and 51 illustrate how lawyers described the ways in which their spouses are helpful in dealing with the stresses of their job. It is clear from their descriptions that in most situations their spouse is helpful in a variety of ways. For example, their spouse might be a lawyer who is a good listener and who provides helpful suggestions or solutions.

Two forms of support identified in Table 49 (good listener and offering support and encouragement) are consistent with what is referred to as emotional support in the stress literature (House & Kahn, 1985; Parasuraman, Purohit, Godshalk, & Beutell, 1996). Emotional support consists of listening, showing concern and empathy, and enhancing the person's confidence or esteem. The descriptions presented in Table 50 suggest that a good listener is one who recalls the details of work from one discussion to the next, shows interest in their partner's situation, and usually does not offer advice or feedback unless specifically requested. The other aspect of emotional support involves being supportive, encouraging, and sympathetic of the spouse's work difficulties. This form is usually in combination with being a good listener, and lawyers tend to prefer that advice or suggestions are not offered unless requested. Table 50 illustrates how lawyers' spouses provide emotional support in helping them to cope with the stresses of their job.

TABLE 50
How lawyers' spouses provide emotional support in helping cope with stress

Good Listener or Sounding Board
"A lot of time what she does the best is listens. Sometimes it's a venting process. She provides practical solutions at times, too."
"He's helpful in the sense that he listens and sometimes I just want to vent and be angry so he'll just listen. If, however, I want advice, he'll offer it. The biggest support for me is that he has no expectation of me to work so I always have that safety net. So if I'm not liking it, I can always quit. And because of the way he is, we have that flexibility and I'm free to work if want to work and I have no obligation to work or responsibility to. So I work because I like it."
"He listens and actually remembers things and asks me how my day was and how specific things were and seems to have an interest in what I do."
"He listens and he's supportive. If I've chosen a course of action he doesn't ask or challenge it. He recalls things that occur and the course of events and the names of people involved. And if I ask for advice, he'll give it. He is generally supportive of what I want to do."
"He listens without being too critical or saying too much. After 20 years of marriage he knows what to say. He takes on a fairly large role at home helping out."
Offers Support and Encouragement
"The fact that she lends a sympathetic ear. It's pretty difficult for her to provide a whole lot of advice in terms of the work-related stresses that have to do with sheer volume and some of the complexities we have to deal with, like difficult clients. From time to time she'll provide useful advice, but mainly she provides a sympathetic ear."
"She listens to my grumbling and whining and complaining and my problems and she genuinely listens and she's supportive and usually takes my side on things and she's very supportive. I'm sure you've heard it too—something happens at work and you go home and vent. I usually go home and tell her about it and every day it's something."
"He can relate sometimes when every person's work environments are different and have different relationships and politics. He can relate to the bizarre relationships and pressures and odd things people do to impose their will on people. Instead of saying 'I don't believe it,' he knows exactly what I mean. He's very supportive and understanding."
"He's pretty objective on the stuff I'm probably overreacting to. He's supportive when I need the support. It's a nice combination."
"I guess she's supportive by taking an interest in what might be affecting me or causing me stress. And if I am quite stressed about something she'll take up more of the share of our house duties."
"He gives me different ways of thinking of things, different strategies, and he builds my self confidence when I'm thinking about different things."
"He listens. He helps me laugh at my day. He never tells me I'm being ridiculous. He gets all upset for me even when I'm not. Mostly it's having someone there who understands what it's like to work in a stressful environment and he understands what that stress is."
"He's very patient and he encourages me and reinforces decisions that I'm making or situations that I'm dealing with. He's a really good listener and not judgmental and reinforces that I'm smart and that I make good decisions."

The other two forms of support listed in Table 49 (offering suggestions and solutions and understanding because they are also a lawyer) involve offering helpful advice or suggestions, which is characteristic of what is labeled informational support in the stress literature (House & Kahn, 1985; Parasuraman et al., 1996). Such support consists of providing advice, suggestions, directives, and relevant information. Some of the lawyers in this study report that their partners are supportive when they do offer helpful advice or suggestions. In these cases, respondents indicated that often times their spouse has encountered similar problems in their jobs and therefore they can share in the stressful experiences and the solutions they used. A number of lawyers feel their spouse is supportive because they are also lawyers and this means they can truly understand the demands and specific stresses associated with practicing law. Consequently, they can also provide good advice based on their own personal experiences. These two aspects of informational support are illustrated by the lawyers' descriptions presented in Table 51.

TABLE 51
How lawyers' spouses provide informational support in helping cope with stress

Offers Suggestions or Solutions
"Mostly listening and just he's a good person to bounce ideas off of and he's a good contributor to problem solving."
"Just bouncing things off her—she used to be a lawyer, so she usually has helpful suggestions from time to time."
"She's very bright, one of the brighter people I know. She can handle a great deal of stress and handle delicate situations. She's been a lot of places I've been so we can provide guidance for each other in those difficult situations and try to balance out what the right thing to do is in a particular situation. We share these agonies with one another."
"Well she has similar stress at her job—if she's dealt with the problem before she tells me how I should approach it or what she did and what I could do."
Spouse Is a Lawyer
"I think because she's a lawyer as well by profession she can empathize with some of the stresses, and she is a good sounding board and can provide some input."
"Because he's a lawyer and he's a year ahead of me he understands usually what I'm experiencing. He can offer good advice because he's gone through it, or he knows someone who's gone through it or he can imagine it."
"More so because she's a lawyer and knows the business. We know the players and pressures and it's a helluva lot easier to tell your partner you'll be working until midnight if they're a lawyer rather than just a spouse."
"The biggest thing is that because he's a lawyer at a similar sized law firm he understands the exact stresses of the job and he can give me ideas as to what to do to make the situation better. I know just from talking with friends who are lawyers, and whose partners are not lawyers, one of the biggest stresses in their life is that their partners don't understand."

Respondents were asked, if they could change one thing that might make their life easier in terms of meeting their various demands and responsibilities, what one thing would they change? This question was asked as another way to identify the major source of stress in lawyers' lives. In total, 44 different changes were listed: 8% said they would like to have more time; 12% would like to have more financial security or earn more; 18% would like to work fewer hours; and 20% said they would change nothing. Table 52 shows the most common changes lawyers would make by gender and work status. More of the men report they would not change anything whereas more of the women report they would prefer to work fewer hours. Whereas more of the women would prefer to have more time in a day, men would prefer to have a greater sense of financial security.

TABLE 52
The most common changes that would make lawyers' lives easier

One Change	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
No change	15%	16%	25%
Reduce work hours	25%	18%	14%
Increase earnings	5%	5%	20%
Have more time	10%	11%	5%

In summary, most lawyers reported experiencing considerable stress over the past two weeks and over the past year. About half indicated that most of this stress over the past two weeks was primarily due to work. Very few reported that it was primarily due to family although one-third of the women working part time report that the stress they experienced reflects a combination of work and family sources. The primary source of stress over the last year appears to be work related. One-quarter of both groups of women indicate that both work and family contributed to their stress over the last year. Women working part time report that work interferes less with their family time than male and female lawyers working full time. However, more women working part time report their family interferes with their work and their family life is a significant source of stress.

In coping with life's ups and downs, many lawyers turn to their spouse or other family members as sources of support. Women working full time, however, are more likely to turn to other lawyers in coping with both general and work-related stress. Lawyers report that their spouses are helpful in coping with the stresses of their job by listening, being supportive and encouraging, offering suggestions or solutions and, in a number of cases especially for female lawyers, their spouses understand their stresses because they are lawyers too. A number of lawyers indicated that working shorter hours or having more time would make their lives easier, and some men felt that having greater financial security might make life easier.

Results and Discussion: Satisfaction With and Commitment to Practicing Law

Previous studies show that job dissatisfaction and lack of commitment are important factors that affect lawyers' decision to continue or quit practicing law (Kay, 1997; Wallace, 1999b). Lawyers were asked to indicate the extent to which they are satisfied with the way their career is going. The majority of lawyers (86%), regardless of their gender or work status appear to be generally satisfied with their careers in law.

TABLE 53
Amount of satisfaction with the way their career is going

	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Very satisfied	35%	34%	41%
Somewhat satisfied	45%	52%	46%
Somewhat dissatisfied	10%	14%	9%
Very dissatisfied	10%	0%	4%

Respondents who indicated they are dissatisfied with their career were asked to explain why they feel this way. Table 54 summarizes some of their responses. Lawyers appear to be dissatisfied if they feel strained from balancing work and family, if they feel drained from the demands of practicing law, or if they are disappointed with the legal profession or the practice of law. These factors overlap considerably with the major sources of stress that lawyers identified in other parts of the interview.

TABLE 54
Why lawyers are dissatisfied with their career in law

"It's trying to strike the whole balance thing and trying to practice law part time is a hard thing to do. It's an ongoing balancing act and other women go off to work at 7:30 and come home at 5:00 and have no feeling that they should be back at the office, they have no lingering feelings about work. You have these professional responsibilities and responsibility for your children and they're all occurring concurrently."

"I'm bored. I chose to practice in this area because I knew it'd give me balance. But the work is pretty routine and not that stimulating. There's low recognition because it's not productive revenue-wise and so my compensation suffers. I have lots of dissatisfaction with work, but it's the best balance you'll ever get."

"I appreciate the progress that I've made in my position and the slack they have given me. It's in this particular environment where the people who succeed and who are rewarded are those who give up everything in their lives for their work. If you're not willing to do that, you don't get very much positive feedback or rewards. You're still working all night and on weekends to get the job done but you're still doing the minimum in their eyes, and that's not very satisfying."

"I think there's always a question of whether or not it's worth it. I think the reason people get involved in law and where they are 10 years down the road are very different."

"I'm somewhat worn down. I have battle fatigue from 20 years of litigation, and that's the maximum that any reasonable human can handle."

"I'm not in love with being a lawyer. If I have to be a lawyer this is where I'll be a lawyer."

"I'm somewhat dissatisfied with my career. There are still gender issues in this practice and I still feel like the odd person out, it's still an 'old boys' network, and the hours that are required, and it's a sink-or-swim environment. It's not a very supportive environment—people don't show you how to do things, you just have to do it on your own."

"I don't like lawyers very much [laughs]. I'm not a big fan of the law, the longer I stay with it, the less satisfaction I have with the profession."

Lawyers were asked to indicate whether they intend to continue practicing law in their current employment situation for some time to come or whether they think they will change jobs in the near future. The majority of lawyers (65%) who participated in this study intend to continue practicing law in their current employment situation. As shown in Table 55, lawyers reports do not vary significantly in this regard by gender or work status.

TABLE 55
Lawyers' commitment to practicing law

Career Attitudes	Women (part time)	Women (full time)	Men (full time)
Intent to stay in current situation	70%	66%	63%
Would practice law if won lottery	40%	50%	69%

Respondents were also asked that if they had as much money as they needed to live as comfortably as they would like, if they won the lottery for example, what would they do. This "lottery question" is often used to assess a person's nonfinancial and sociopsychological commitment to work (Morrow, 1993). Lawyers in this study answered this question by listing a variety of combinations that involved full-time and part-time work in law and not in law, volunteer work, staying home with family, traveling, returning to school, etc. Table 55 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would continue to practice law in some capacity and/or in some combination with other activities. Less than half of the women working part time (40%) indicated they would continue to work part time in law. Half of the women working full time (50%) and the majority of men (69%) indicated they would continue practicing law, although most (about 80%) noted they would practice part time instead of full time. As indicated at the onset of this report, lawyers' perceptions of "part-time" work generally refer to working 35 or 40 hours a week. The preference to work part time in law appears to reflect lawyers' dissatisfaction with the excessive time commitments demanded by the practice of law.

When asked why they might leave their current situation, lawyers gave a variety of responses that may be grouped into three general themes. Some of these responses are presented in Table 56 in the lawyers' own words. One prevalent theme is that lawyers would leave their current situation in order to be able to obtain a job that would be more compatible with having and raising a family. Others indicated that they would change jobs so that they could have a less demanding job that offered more reasonable work hours and/or less stress. These two themes reflect predominant concerns in the literature on the legal profession that the practice of law makes it difficult to have and raise a family and that the time demands are excessive and stressful (Brockman, 1994; Epstein et al., 1999; Hagan & Kay, 1995; Seron & Ferris, 1995; Wallace, 1994). Lastly, some lawyers simply indicated that they would change jobs because they will likely be bored or would like to try something different in the future.

TABLE 56
Why lawyers might leave their current employment situation

Change Due to Family Concerns
"I think down the road I'll probably have to change because I'm considering having kids, probably not next year, but the year after. For me I'm in a transition spot because I can't see my clients being happy with me not working as much. If I do have kids, I don't want to work evenings, preferably four days a week or at least 9 to 5 with a more regular type of life. When these deals happen, like in August, and I had to be in every day and for at least 12 hours a day, it just wouldn't work. And that's not fair to the client if you're not there when they need you or your family to be here all the time. I may be able to work here as a supporting role but chances are that's not realistic, so I'll probably go in-house."
"I am contemplating going in-house because of the partnership problem and because I'm absolutely not going to work the way I did before I had children."
"Likely changing, I don't know. I have three children so I can't keep this up. I have contemplated it."
"So far, so good. But I guess you said this was confidential ... I see myself changing down the road, but I don't know what and I have several options. And this isn't going to last forever. It's great but it's very difficult in a practice in a large law firm to cope with the strains of family life and the strains of working and especially since this disproportionately falls on women. Large law firms are not set up to deal with the fact that women procreate, and large law firms are not set up to deal with that. Women who do well here typically don't have children. Some have managed, but it tends to be their own peculiar circumstance that allows them to do that, and they're few and far between. There's not many of them. Women partners tend not to have children and there's not many of them. We're not going to see the same increased rate that we've seen with associates."
"Probably change jobs. I'd stay at a medium-sized law firm if I could work on more of a part-time basis or else I would move to something were I could to do something else that I could do with my law degree with a more regular schedule because I plan on having a family and I can't have one with these hours."
Change Due to Time Demands and/or Stress
"I'll be changing because I can't keep at this pace."
"I don't know what I'd change to. Probably a mid-size law firm or in-house counsel to get away from the pressure and stress of the long hours."
"I'd like to be able to change, but once you're into the rut it's hard to get out. I'd like to go into a large office where you don't have the same financial ups and downs. It's feast or famine here, and I'd like something that's more consistent and have other individuals look after the day-to-day stuff, which I presently look after."
"I would change to go in-house. I worked for a corporation for 10 years and I don't want to live like this. I don't want to work all the time."
Need a Change
"Change? I imagine I'll get bored after a while and just change."
"I'd like to change jobs but I don't think I could make as much money anywhere else. You get tired of selling yourself by the six-minute interval. You like to think you have good ideas, but your good ideas cost your clients the same as the bad ones. I'd like my ideas to be paid by how good they are, but that's law firm practice. I'd like to have a shot at business at some stage."
"I expect I'll do this for the next 10 to 12 years and then I'll make some kind of career transition. At that point I expect litigation in large firms won't exist and I'll go into some time kind of boutique arrangement."

In summary, most lawyers are generally satisfied with their careers in law and intend to continue working in their current employment situation. Lawyers who might consider leaving their current job would do so in order to obtain one that demands fewer hours, is more compatible with having a family, or because they need a change from their current job. Many lawyers would continue to practice law if they were financially independent, although most would prefer to work in a part-time capacity.

Comments by Participants in the Survey

At the end of the interview, participants were asked if they had any additional comments that they would like to add that they feel are important in understanding their experiences as a lawyer and how they juggle their job demands and other aspects of their life. Most of the participants (88%) volunteered additional comments, and in the following pages some of these remarks are presented. The feedback from the lawyers who participated in this study highlights the issues and concerns they have regarding their day-to-day experiences practicing law.

Sources of Stress

Many respondents expressed their views on the work-related stress associated with practicing law. Several sources were identified that include (1) the excessive time pressures and demands; (2) the general expectation that work comes first; (3) the difficulties in raising a family, especially for female lawyers; (4) certain self-imposed pressures; and (5) lawyers' treatment of one another. These are illustrated in respondents' own words in greater detail below.

Time pressures and demands. As indicated throughout this report, many lawyers feel that the amount of work expected in combination with deadlines or short time lines makes practicing law extremely stressful.

> "You get this discomfort from the job and realize you don't have enough time, and you think it'll only be for a while. Then, after a while, you have this sick realization that it's not temporary and you're caught on this treadmill. But it's tough to get off the treadmill and getting off the treadmill causes pressures as well."

> "The way communications and the way business is, it's going to be more like this firm in New York where they have two shifts and 24-hour-lawyer support and 24-hour-secretarial support, and that means you work more than 8:30 until 6:30. We have a 42 year-old lawyer here who just had a breakdown. It's pretty scary. His personality is a big key to it, but he got to a point where he got trapped... And there's lots of people close to breaking down around here. If I was a securities lawyer, could I control the insanity? No. The market time is essential."

> "Even if I didn't have children, I would argue that you shouldn't be expected, unless it's the conditions of your job, to work outside regular hours. I think you need a life outside of work ... Once you've given 8-hours-a-day that's the bulk of your waking hours and it's not fair to ask for more unless there's remuneration involved and you can agree to it. But that's not reality."

> "The things I struggle with in trying to accommodate my family's needs and desires and my clients' demands at work are something that everyone deals with who works. Our company says it believes in work-life balance and that's its policy. Yet, when it comes to being here after hours to get the work done, if you try to say you'll do it the next day or later, that would not be an acceptable response ... I'm trying to get better at it. I'll tell them "I've made a commitment to my family and I can't be there for that meeting." If you want to be part of a team, that's what you have to do. I don't think anyone would say you absolutely have to stay here, but it'd come back to you when you're rated on your performance or you may not be involved in the next deal."

> "I think that most lawyers don't balance it very well, particularly in private practice. There's a lot of really good things about private practice but there's a lot of things that really infringe on your time and social things that are mandatory. You spend almost all your waking time with workaholics so you accept it as normal, and you don't get much time interacting with others who don't and it gets normalized. So then you get these internal and external pressures to be there all the time and it's hard to say no. You think there's something wrong with you because you don't love it and you think everyone else does, but they don't. Unfortunately, I don't know what will help, but I know I didn't know what it'd be like to be a lawyer. I had a very different perception of what it was going to be like, and it's not like what you think it'll be by any stretch of the imagination. It's boring as hell and working really long hours are only okay if you love it."

Two lawyers described how client demands have increased significantly and have contributed to the problems of unreasonable time demands and work-related stress.

> "I think the demands of private practice have increased immensely and it's a very, very stressful life. One of the difficulties is that clients are very unhappy and people should carefully consider whether they want to be a litigator. I've lost faith in the system. Clients pay you a lot to fight for them and they're often unhappy at the end. It is very difficult to get any job satisfaction and nobody says thank you—either in the firm or who you work for."

> "Clients are more and more demanding. The fax and cell phone have not served us well. Before, when I started in 1980, things could be "in the mail." It's on your desk now and you can only deal with one problem at a time mentally even though we've speeded up the technology. Lawyers are more competitive and want to sell more of their time—we're prostitutes. We sell an hour of our time, that's all we have to sell, and then we've lost it forever. It's competitive, and they want more income, more money, and I don't see how you solve the problem. I will take less money so that there's quality time, and we can hire more lawyers to do more work. I don't know how you get rid of the insanity. Clients are more demanding, the public doesn't want to pay for your services, and they don't understand that you're giving them something of value. In small firms, it's a struggle and I couldn't practice what I do here. No one thinks what we do is valuable. The services for our corporate client is instantaneous and if you don't do it, someone else will ... I think a major change to fix things would be to have the public perceive they should pay for it and that'd make a huge difference. Mall lawyers do wills for a $100. Even the profession doesn't say what we do is of value—we cut prices against one another. The profession itself has not valued itself, and the Law Society protects the public not the profession. Good people will select out of the profession. All you have to sell is your time and once you sell that hour it's gone."

Work comes first. In combination with the excessive time demands and workloads, lawyers feel that they must place work as their first and foremost priority all of the time.

> "I don't know if you have the sense or not—work comes first and that is where your priorities are being when you're scheduling your time, your day, or your month. You make up your work schedule and you look at it and then decide what can you do with your time when you're not working and how you can fit in time for social activities, your down time, and your time with your family, and these are the things that are typically sacrificed."

> "I think probably the most important thing that I didn't tell you is that you're at work for "x" number of hours and if someone, or a partner, calls you, you come in. You don't even think about it and it doesn't matter what you're doing or when it is. If you're on vacation, or it's midnight or whatever. The law takes precedence over everything and it's the most important aspect of your life and you cancel things and you don't say no to anything. Even if I could work 9:00 to 6:00 it's so I can go at night and leave work behind, but your job description is to make the client happy at any cost. And that's probably what I don't like the most. I have no control over what I do and even when you're a partner and the client says "I need this right away" you can't say no."

Difficulties especially for women. Quite a few lawyers, both male and female, raised concerns about the difficulties that women face in the legal profession in terms of being successful, especially if they want to have a family. They explained how having a family has a different impact on men's and women's careers. They suggested that while men often have stay-at-home wives to take care of their family needs, women typically do not have this option. Furthermore, many believe that part-time work is not a satisfactory alternative if women want to have a successful career in law.

> "The vast majority of partners' (in law firms) wives don't [have careers], so their wives take care of it all—the "jet pilot life style." They have a wife who takes care of all their needs, feeds them, and sends them back out. When it comes to child care, the vast majority of guys, being these guys whose wives don't work, they don't bear the equivalent load, particularly when the kids are younger ... The juggling and being a female in my [male lawyer] shoes would be way, way worse, and maybe that's why there aren't any left."

"I guess as you figured out, my wife doesn't have any aspirations for a career of her own and that makes life quite simple for me. We have a very traditional arrangement and that works fine ..."

"When I look around my firm and at the women who succeed, I see that 5 of the 60 partners are women. It's incredibly difficult and I feel especially for the young women. The women who've made it have decided to be like men and they run their careers like men. I think it's impossible to have children and be married and be female and be successful."

"I guess from just my observations in my field, I know one woman at a firm who became a partner and I think she's anorexic. She has a little one (year or year and a half old) and she gets up at 3:00 in the morning and works until 6:00 or 7:00 every night, and her husband's a lawyer and he works late. I couldn't do that. It's just outrageous what she's doing and who's she serving? She can't be serving her child, she can't be serving her husband or herself—it's a lose-lose situation. A lot of people are doing that and I just don't get it."

A number of lawyers explained that they do not believe it is possible to have a truly successful career in law by working part time.

"I think, as a lawyer, it's extremely hard to find a job to do part time and still feel good about it. I have a very good situation, especially in the field I'm in. I don't think it's a good career for women who want to have a family."

"I think it's still hard to be a female lawyer, and I think it's still a different thing to be a female lawyer in Calgary than a male lawyer ... There's also the pressure of family. I'm sure there's pressures for men, but for women it's about having children and taking care of them and staying home with them, and part-time work doesn't work in law and it's all about priorities, I guess. Part-time practice doesn't work from what I've seen, where my friends try to work shortened hours or fewer days. They still end up doing the same amount of work, they just do it at home instead. And you're off the partnership track if you're in private practice."

Several respondents felt that barriers still exist in the legal profession that prevent women from being successful.

"I guess there's the female aspect that comes into play and I've decided to deal with the family-career demands. This has changed over time, and I'm slowly changing my perspective to focus on his career, and as for what's important for me, family is more important ... I also think there's still a barrier to women moving up in the profession, and I left private practice because I couldn't see that I could be a partner and have a family. The gender issue is still there and I think it's very important."

"... The Bertha Wilson report, I think it's eight years old now, and things haven't changed that much since then, even though on the surface things look equal."

One woman described the difficulties and expense of child care arrangements that are compatible with the unpredictable time demands of practicing law.

"One of the things that I haven't felt is covered is the catch-22 with financial burdens. I pay our live-out nanny $22,000 year, and to pay her I have to make $44,000, and to break even we have to make about $65,000 each; so you both have to bring in about $100,000 a year. Some people ask why we don't send them to day care, and it just doesn't work with this job. You have to pick them up and drop them off and the stress levels are so high. I have a good situation. It's great, but it has its sacrifices too. We tried sharing nannies but now we have three kids and that's too many to work out that way ... And the overall financial aspects require you have someone staying at home all the time or you have a nanny. Rarely can it work so that you can have someone taking care of them outside the house because you don't know if you can always be there at 5:00 to pick them up."

Self-imposed pressures. A number of lawyers emphasized that the reasons they work the hours that they do are self-imposed. That is, they are making a conscious choice to work the hours that they do, and some explained that this is because they want to succeed or because they derive satisfaction from it.

> "A lot of the questions seem to focus on external sources, there's also an internal element as well. I think I'm probably working more than I'd otherwise prefer, but on the other hand I am in control. I make the decision to come into work or not and that element might be missing because at a certain level we are responsible for the hours we work.
>
> "I don't know if being a lawyer is unique in that there's so many demands on our time from a variety of sources. I seem to discuss that more and more with friends and family, about time pressures and how to better spend your time and seize the moment, and everyone else seems to be in the same boat. Although, in part, we take it upon ourselves. We complain about it a lot but also derive a lot of satisfaction from it. I'm willing to put up with the time pressures. I wouldn't quit my career simply to relieve the time pressures."
>
> "What I'd like to reiterate is something that my husband understands so much, and I think it's because he's a professional too. My family doesn't really understand. They think that I'm forced to work the hours I do and that the firm is a terrible place because of that. If you have a desire to succeed, you put a lot of pressure on yourself, and it's not like someone else is standing over you doing it and telling you you have to work 70 hours a week. I think my family has a hard time understanding that a lot of it's internal and for the moment this is what it's all about."

Two women explained that the reason they work the way they do is for their children—to provide for them or to be a good role model for them.

> "I think that one of the things that's interesting is working to make sure that your kids have things and there's a difficult trade off there. For example, both of my kids go to private school ... So, I feel I have to work over and above one job to be able to do that. And, I want them to have piano lessons and squash lessons and things that I didn't have. So part of what I'm doing is making sure I have more money so I can get things for my kids. It's not just that I feel some pressure to do that, to work like I do, to me I'm in it for my kids."
>
> "You do this and you spend a lot of time at it and you love it and you're controlling things, and making things happen and meeting a lot of neat people, but it's hard to make the two work ... I think it's important for women to have a career and that both partners contribute and set that example for their children. I think it's every parent's job and spouse's job to contribute equally, paid or otherwise. My kids see us as a good example and how we contribute and it's important for my kids to see that ..."

Some lawyers described this internal drive to work hard and long hours as symptomatic of the workaholic tendency among lawyers.

> "I really love a lot of what I do. I don't have much of a social life or other responsibilities, in terms of spending time having hobbies or a relationship, or being a parent, or having a dog or a fish. I'm a sister, a daughter, and a friend. I've been a workaholic my whole life ..."
>
> "I think a lot of lawyers are workaholics and a lot don't deal well with the pressures put on them by their clients. They make commitments to their clients that aren't realistic so they have to work all the time and they won't say no to clients. A lot of lawyers are consumed with making more money so they work really long hours just because they want more money and they end up having no lifestyle."

Lawyers' treatment of one another. A number of lawyers expressed concern over the general atmosphere of the legal profession and how lawyers treat one another. The lawyers quoted below suggested that some lawyers do not treat each other with respect or courtesy and that the competition for clients and sheer greed are largely responsible.

> "Stepping back, forget about having a family and just assume everyone is single, it's still unbelievable how they treat you ... They don't even know what they [other lawyers] are being subjected to. They don't even realize it's abnormal. And they don't even realize that it's your basic rights that you don't have anymore. Never mind equality, it's just treating people with dignity and respect that's the problem."

> "One thing you didn't touch on and what creates stress in the job, apart from the time demands, is in litigation practice, counsel on the other side of files. There's a concern from the Law Society right now about the lack of congeniality among lawyers. The biggest source of discontent for me is that handful of files where you're dealing with an asshole on the other side. If I could eliminate that it'd be perfect. My perception, from speaking to more senior members of the Bar, is that it was a kinder, gentler kind of atmosphere. Now, the competition for clients is so fierce and people no longer show the same respect or courtesy, and it can be quite personal at times, or seems to be, and that can make this job horrible."

> "It occurs to me that one thing I haven't mentioned is that interacting with other lawyers in the course of work, in particular since I came to this job, is a huge stressor because of the style of practice I've encountered. In the Criminal Bar, it's a far more collegial bar and frankly, I think a more honorable bar. I've really been shocked at dealing with civil litigators who waste a lot of time, who obsess about process, and who seem to me to try and avoid the issues rather than trying to use the law to solve problems. It's given me a disturbing insight into the profession, and given me a better understanding of why people are so antagonistic toward lawyers. I've seen lots of lawyers wasting a lot of their clients' money, and who obstruct justice rather than trying to further it. I've encountered a whole group of people who are disenfranchised with the civil system and who are overly concerned with victims' rights, and I think it's displaced in the civil system. In the civil system it's too complicated or too expensive. It's really given me a really disturbing view of our legal system and how lawyers' perform in the legal systems. It's a huge aspect of my concern in what I do on a daily basis. I still hold onto the view that it's an honorable profession, or was when it was established, and is really important to the quality of our society. Now I think it's failing in many areas and that really concerns me as I wonder what I can to do change it. It makes me feel rather overwhelmed."

> "I do have some ideas on what is wrong with the practice of law, which is pretty general. Lawyers are their own worst enemies and they create this artificial time environment and pass it on lawyer to lawyer. When I started in corporate counsel about 15 years ago, people got into it because it didn't have the politics and pressures. Large firm lawyers have modeled it so that it's political and time oriented, and it's attracting people for the wrong reasons and with the wrong personalities. I believe a lot of what's here we do to ourselves. The best way to explain it is to explain the real estate practice. The real estate agents refuse to give the reduction in the 7% in their fees, and lawyers are doing anything to undercut fees and just doing it for volume."

Coping Strategies

Lawyers described how they try and cope with the demands of practicing law. Some of these strategies include: (1) keeping it in perspective; (2) placing limits on work time; (3) having an adequate support system; (4) taking a temporary leave of absence; and (5) exercise.

Keeping it in perspective. A predominant strategy appears to be trying to keep it all in perspective and recognizing the priorities in one's life. The following quotes illustrate how several male lawyers have decided what is most important to them and for them it is their families.

> "I imagine it's come through pretty clearly that work is third or fourth on my list of priorities. My priorities are my son, my family, and my connection with the outdoors that I connect through with my horses. I see work as a means to an end rather than an end in itself."

> "The biggest change, even for me, and getting married was a huge change and wonderful thing in my life, was the birth of my son. That has really changed me and enabled me to balance and cope and try to keep things in perspective or at least I know what perspective they should be."

> "One thing I always tell my articling students is that it's important to have an exercise component in your day and a family component in your day. You see too many people who become too involved in it and they've lost perspective and leave the profession after 10 or 15 years. My first visit with my student, I get them over to the YMCA and get them signed up and working out every other day and tell them "you have to have this balance in your life." I don't know how I compare, but it's a priority for me to be at home by supper and spend time with the kids."

Several women described very different ways in which they kept work in perspective: One remembers to be thankful for what she has, another works in a firm with mostly female lawyers who place an importance on family life, another is not overly concerned with having a perfectly clean house, and one suggests that everyone needs to figure out what makes them happy.

> "I've been incredibly blessed and my church experience is really helpful in giving me some perspective and balance. I have a job, my kids are in good health, and I'm in good health and have a roof over my head and when I'm cranky I have to feel blessed and I love my life. I'd love more time here and there, but then I'd fill it up with more and then I'd want even more. I wish I had more time and everybody has the same 24 hours a day, so maybe it's a function of life. I have some wonderful control over my life because of the kind of work I do and if I come in at 9:00 they rib me about it, but a lot of people don't have that flexibility. Yeah, it's stressful, but there's a lot of flexibility and the support staff here don't have that. I have to be careful about what I'm complaining about because it all is really insignificant."

> "I think I have a bit of a unique firm and it has a huge proportion of women at this firm. I think it makes a difference in terms of the culture of our firm and how we problem solve. And I think it's really different for men and women and how they have their families—most of the men have wives at home and their issues aren't the same. The women have power in the firm and a say in how we approach things and how the men view us. Our view as mothers and wanting to spend time at home is never denigrated here. I think it makes a difference in terms of whether I think that I can do it."

> "I don't let my home responsibilities overwhelm me. I'm content to live with a less than perfect household, mess wise. If it's necessary to go to work in the morning and if there's dishes in the sink when I leave, it doesn't bother me. I know it would bother some people ..."

> "I think it's just a matter of knowing what you're personally capable of and you have to maintain a balance. While there's going to be family demands and client demands, you have to be able to balance them and everyone has to figure that out and figure out what makes them happy. I see people at work who get totally sucked into work and don't have anything outside of the office. They don't realize that there's something else besides work, or there should be and if they don't figure that out, after a while it'll be too late. I think it's a matter of keeping a balance and making sure that you have that."

Placing limits on work time. Other lawyers talked about how it is important to place limits on work such that it does not takeover their entire life, and how important it is to maintain a balance between different aspects of one's life.

> "I do try and make it a practice to regularize my hours so at least the family can rely on me being home at the same time each and every week night. So I get home by 7:30 or 7:45 every evening. It's later than a lot of parents, but at least they know I'll be home at that time. It's very rare for me to work in the office until 10:00 at night and it's also rare for me to be home at 4:30 or 5:00."

> "I have in my career, on more than one occasion, made the conscious decision there's so much I'll do and beyond that I won't do any more. It doesn't work that badly. I basically made the decision that I do what I have to do in the 11 hours I'm prepared to put in at the office, otherwise it doesn't get done or someone else will have to do it, or whatever. I have the luxury I'm at a certain stage in my career I can do it. My guess is that to some extent when you're older you don't have young kids which really makes it difficult. Through the 80s, when my kids were younger, I was coming in at 6:30 and I'd go until 6:30 and then come home and have dinner with them and stay there until about 8:00. Then, after they went to bed, I'd go back to the office for two hours. At the end of the day that worked out all right. It was a little hard on the marriage and the relationship with my second child, he got short changed a bit with it, but it worked out okay."

Some lawyers attemped to place limits on their work, and they did not feel they were entirely successful in this regard.

> "I think, and I'm speaking as a very junior lawyer, the hardest part of my life is to leave work at work and not let it intrude on the rest of my life, and I've been wholly unsuccessful in doing that as long as I've been a lawyer. It's my number one priority that I'm working on and if I can't do it it'll either cut my legal career short or drive me crazy. It took me a long time to recognize this, that it's not something I can do and when things are going bad at work, that's when I think I should get out."

> "I think a lot of my peers at my age just starting out, as a second year associate, think that you can make a significant focus on the work world rather than personal life when you're starting out. You can make those sacrifices in the short term but not over your entire life as a life style in the long term. I don't see that as a realistic life style for a normal human being over the course of their life."

> "The thing is that these jobs are great for people who don't have other aspects of their life and it's absolutely vital to have other aspects. I don't know people who stay around for a long time who don't have impeccable home support because you don't have time to do it or you have home support or you're single or you have a stay-at-home wife because that's absolutely vital. And if you don't have that support from the spouse it has to come from somewhere else, otherwise it's really difficult. These are high pressure jobs and suited for people who identify heavily with their job and whose self-esteem and ego awareness comes from the position. There are also people who have mastered the art, and I haven't done this, they've mastered the art of being able to lessen the load at work and still maintain the high billings that are required. They can keep their weekends and evenings open and I haven't managed to do that. It could be on my part a disability to get there but I know that there are people out there that don't have as demanding a load as I do, and I think it's because they can manage their practice better. So it's not impossible. But in this job you will be called upon to work evenings and weekends on a regular basis as a lawyer. You don't take time off if you're in the middle of trial—I've never seen it happen. It's just the nature of the practice. There's no way, unless you're a solicitor or a litigator and never had to go to trial and have a very light load, you might be able to get away without working evenings and weekends. So, it's not impossible but I haven't done it yet."

Support systems. Several lawyers explained that their support systems helped them to cope with the stress of their job. They referred to their spouse, family, firm, and paid assistance around the house as essential sources of support.

> "I suppose one of the things that I would consider myself pretty lucky about is that the firm has been very supportive and my husband has been very supportive. For some other women, they have one or both of those things missing and I think that makes it a lot more challenging than if you have them and can take them for granted."

> "I was fortunate my parents lived in the city and they were very helpful and supportive when I had the two children and the first divorce. I was always having help from someone. I had a nanny, a part-time housekeeper, and I outsourced things and I could not have done it without that."

> "I can imagine why there's a high divorce rate when there's a lawyer and a nonlawyer. It's bad though when you're both lawyers because we're always talking work and law, but we also give each other suggestions. That's bad and too much focus. But if I have tell her I have to be in all weekend, she just knows what it means and she's not pissed. If she was in a regular job not in law, spouses view it as a choice and don't understand. It is a choice, but if you want to do the profession, you really don't have a choice and they don't understand that."

Temporary leaves of absence. Lawyers who took a temporary leave of absence explain how this helped rejuvenate them and revitalize their attitudes towards practicing law.

> "I made a big switch when I took that time off [for one year]. I highly recommend that if people can do that, they do it. It was like I was 22 again and starting all over. I wasn't jaundiced, I could look at people's problems and care about them You're a happier person because of it. Trying to manage lawyers is a thankless job so why would you want to do it?" [laughs]

> "The sabbatical in our office, some have never taken one because they feel they're irreplaceable. I left and a whole bunch of juniors took over my files and they got a great experience. Within a few months, I was back up to full speed. It was good for my overall mental health and not detrimental to my career. It's not like they couldn't do without me or the world was going to stop with me being away. "

Exercise. Exercise was another strategy used by lawyers to burn off work-related stress.

> "I find that the exercise that I get, really helps a lot. [It] is really good for me. It takes a lot of concentration and gets your mind off of things."

> "You haven't really covered that the job is always stimulating and there's not a lot of down time. You're always using your brain and when you don't have any down time you're always thinking and you can't let others take over for a while. So what makes it interesting also makes it stressful. For the most part that's why we work out right after work to get some physical work out and it's a nice buffer. If I don't work out, I tend to bring it all home with me."

Alternatives to Traditional Law Firm Practice

In many interviews lawyers discussed certain career changes they made and how they felt about the consequences of these changes. These lawyers previously worked in a law firm in a traditional full-time capacity. Two general career changes are described below: (1) transitions to full-time positions in other work settings; and (2) transitions to part-time work. As well, several lawyers comment on the difficulties associated with trying to leave private practice.

Transitions to other full-time positions. A number of lawyers left law firm practice and now work in government or private corporations as in-house council. All expressed considerable satisfaction with their decision to leave their traditional law firm careers behind. A significant benefit appears to be fewer time demands and less stress than that associated with law firm practice.

> "I'm where I am as of matter of choice. I'm sure you're getting responses from people who work evenings and weekends all the time. It's a matter of choice that I left large firm practice so I could do the very things I'm doing now."

> "I did find when I was in private practice that I had very significant stress and it's very significantly different from what it is now... It is a lot less than it was and it's a trade off. I feel I have more in quality than I did before and I don't wake up in the middle of the night and feel sick thinking about it. A stressful day now isn't even close to what it was then ..."

> "In contrast to private practice, I've only been here [in-house council] a year and a half, and it's just a different world. In this job you can actually do other things whereas in private practice work was number one and it had to be. You have a little control here and you don't have any in private practice."

Transitions to part-time work. Many of the women working part time expressed positive attitudes towards the way their arrangements allowed them to accommodate their family life. They recognized that they had made some sacrifices in terms of earnings potential and promotion opportunities but they generally felt the reward of having a more balanced family life was worth it.

> "Over the past 11 years, it's [part-time work] certainly more accepted now than it used to be. It'd used to be that I wasn't a "real" lawyer and now I work with other lawyers and I get "oh is that ever cool," so the attitude has changed. I think it's less of a mark of inadequacy and I don't find that as much anymore. It may be that I'm older and I have more experience now than I did before. I feel that I get a lot of pressure from my work place to work full time and it has certainly has hurt my career. I don't get the big promotions but that's not that important to me. I feel really lucky the way things have worked out. I enjoy my work and on the days that I'm home, that's my job. I've had to do some manipulating but I've been really fortunate. I left a great job and wondered what am I doing but I did luck out and people are more receptive to it now than before."

> "I think the job share is absolutely key and it hasn't got enough recognition. When you work on your own part time, when you're not there it just doesn't get done. We have a wonderful match and we get it done. We pass off the same things. Some things we take more of the lead on and the extent that we can control meetings and try to keep it to one of us and when we have to we pass it off we do. It runs it pretty seamlessly and we consider it a sign of success when they forget which one they're talking to. We've been treated more than fairly and we've had promotions and raises and it's just great."

The following women expressed how unhappy they would be if they were working full time instead of part time.

> "One really important one is that if we had gone through this interview earlier, when I was working full time, my responses would have been much more negative than they are now. I really feel that working part time has accommodated some balance in my life, although not optimal, it's certainly better than when I was working the full-time partnership track. Then, I had absolutely no time for anything else or anybody else and there was a total required commitment in terms of hours on behalf of the firm."

> "The only thing that I would add is, that is, were I working full time I would hate my life, I would absolutely hate my life, and I would be totally dissatisfied with the quality of time I had to spend with my children and my husband. I would be bitter beyond belief. I think it's impossible to do both 100%, absolutely impossible. I do have friends trying to do both and they're not very happy."

Some women explained the reluctance of employers to make part-time arrangements despite their financial viability.

> "I have worked out an exceptional [reduced hours] arrangement and I think I have a good perspective from both sides. I think of the last six women who the firm accommodated, five didn't come back. So we gave them a paid maternity leave for a year and then after that they say "oh yeah, I won't be coming back." So that makes it hard to support these types of arrangements and ask for them, even if you say you'll be coming back. I think it's easier when you're a partner because you've shown them what you can do and you've been there a while. It's a lot harder for associates, I think, but again I can see it from the firm's side too. So I think it's going to take a while for things to change in firms when that goes on. It's hard to be accommodating when you're not sure they're going to come back."

> "I was unsuccessful in doing it in a traditional capacity. I was one of a few women in a large firm, and I successfully negotiated two leaves that were not available for other individuals and to work flex time and part time was unacceptable then. Employers love part time because they pay less and not in a manner to the commitment you receive. The legal profession and the traditional large firm view you as if you just weren't a team player and you have to give 110% or it doesn't count at all. I think it's still very pervasive, and there's very little accommodation for alternatives and that's not withstanding the financial viability."

A number of women expressed some of the drawbacks to working part ' me in terms of leaving the partnership track, earning less, the difficulty of meeting clients' demands.

> "You can't survive in a law firm part time because you won't be on the partnership track. They don't have the permanent associate thing worked out. I've read about that in the States, but I don't think they're there yet in Canada. I think Canadian lawyers aren't there because they want the big financial reward. It might be that in a boutique firm you can do what we're doing here.
>
> In working part time, you get the flexibility you don't have with full-time work. You're not making as much, so you don't feel guilty about leaving before 10:00 at night. In law firms it's just crazy like that. You're being paid so much and you think you have to put in all those long hours and everybody does and they're just crazy."

> "There is one thing that nobody every asks and that's key for women who want to work part time—it's not what firms impose on you but clients. Clients can be looking for you at times that are not necessarily convenient for you, and you have to deal with that. Part time works okay until you have the responsibility for people who depend on you and then you have to find a way to deal with that. I can sympathize with why firms say these arrangements are difficult, because you can't say you'll never be available at this time ever. And this is something people don't ask about with part-time arrangements. And I imagine it's similar for other professional women. When people are depending on you and are worried and don't know what's going on, you have to meet that obligation."

> "Women are clearly getting the short end of the stick and I don't think they're getting promoted, they're not getting the remuneration because they're not mainstream. When I looked at it, and they circulate those things, my billings for part-time work was more than some of those who worked full time, so I was a pretty good deal for the firm. But that was the last time they tried the part-time thing, even though it was financially viable."

Difficulty of leaving law firm practice. Two lawyers describe how difficult it is to leave traditional law firm practice. The first lawyer has left private practice and the second now works reduced hours in a law firm.

> "This friend of mine sent me this copy of an article from a Canadian lawyer magazine when I was in Japan, and this article was about this lawyer in Ontario and who left private practice too and in this article it was compared to a cult and how you leave. When I left, and a friend of mine left, I remember her saying that she'd have this problem with feeling that she's just such a loser and totally inadequate because if you're not in private practice you're nothing. A lot of your status is tied to your firm and your position in the firm. As soon as you lose that you have to define yourself in a new way and you really have to come to terms with that and be convinced you can still be a worthwhile individual without being in private practice. I've heard a lot of people say they've had trouble dealing with it when they left. After I left, people called me, people I really didn't know that well and they said they really admired me for what I did and how they couldn't do it even if they wanted to. It's okay to talk about it afterwards and people tend to bond who have done it, but you don't talk about leaving before you do it."

> "Our partners work hard. They're 55 and don't know how to do anything else. I was saying to one partner 'Myhusband is a very good father,' but he said his wife wouldn't say that about him. You're making a trade off. They box themselves in with three-quarters of a million house with a three car garage and the three cars, the kids are in private school, and it's a treadmill. People have no idea how to pull back and get off."

It is interesting to compare the perspectives given by more junior and senior lawyers regarding their experiences and the time demands of practicing law. First, some of the junior lawyers' comments are presented.

> "At this stage of my career, I spend a lot of time thinking about whether I want this as a career and whether this is for me or not." [has practiced law for one month]
>
> "I guess that it's more difficult as a junior lawyer. The more senior you are, the easier it gets and you can turn down work. As a junior there's different expectations."
>
> "I think from what it looks like in the firm and from those more senior than I am, the first three or four years are the most difficult years and there's a very steep learning curve. Law school doesn't prepare you as well as the teachers at law school think they prepare you. It's a very different time frame here. The first four years are tough because you're learning so much and there's lots to learn and lots of opportunities to learn it in."
>
> "I think that as a junior lawyer and someone who's just gone through articles and only practiced for a year, I feel we're supposed to be available to everyone all the time. Partners forget to ask what else we're doing at work and in the rest of our life. Sometimes we need to leave the office. We do have husbands, wives, pets, hobbies and they forget that those are just as important. Their outside life is just as important as their work life and that should be for junior lawyers too. I don't know why they don't understand that. We're expected to give it up and we too readily give it up."
>
> "These days, younger lawyers are less tolerant and have less maniacal attitudes and I have less of that ..."
>
> "All of my friends are in the same boat and, that is, none of us are happy with work and none of us see ourselves here for the long term. In my inner circle of 10 friends who practice law, most are talking about doing an LL.M. or going in-house or traveling. That's because this profession is not what any of us thought it would be .. :vone of us will be in this another five or six years. When you go to law school they gear you toward law firm practice. Women leave and have babies and don't come back and men leave and do other things. I think it's a function of people today, and my generation is different than my dad's, and they were there for 25 years and are partners now. My friends have been to two or three firms in our first two years of law school and we're looking for decent hours and decent pay and interesting work. It's a sad state. I never discouraged anyone from going to law school before now, but if I had a son or daughter I'd sit them down and make them think about it. It's hard to get in, it's expensive, and you're paying off these huge student loans your first few years out, and most of them don't like it, so think about what you'd really like to do with your life. In 10 years you may not be doing law, but as a stepping stone for other things or to get into politics it's a great degree to have, and they really do teach you a lot of valuable things. Since I started practicing law, I've never recommended to anyone to be a lawyer."

In contrast, some of the more experienced lawyers have the following to say ...

> "We've had huge turnover among our junior associates and they're not going to other firms. They're going to other places, corporations and the like. The students don't have the work ethic ..."
>
> "I don't come in the office every weekend. I did when I was younger and you see the younger guys here every weekend, but not me anymore. Now that I'm older, my weekends and evenings are dedicated to entertainment. "
>
> "I assume you're talking to a broad group of people who are advancing through different stages of their careers. I think the comfort thing comes after a long time of being frightened all the time. There's more stress for younger lawyers and less as you get older. The idea of having children, of having them in the first seven years of practicing law—I don't know how I would have coped with that—it's scary. I had my kids later."

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Conclusions

This section summarizes the main findings of this study by combining the quantitative results presented in the tables as well as comments provided by lawyers throughout the interviews.

The Time Demands of Practicing Law

The lawyers who were interviewed were asked to describe in detail the hours that they usually work in a typical week. The hours that the lawyers reported working clearly illustrate the time demands of practicing law. While lawyers in this study work on average 50 hours a week, more than half regularly work evenings and weekends. Most feel they have to work long hours in response to client demands, professional expectations and/or billing requirements. In combination with the excessive time demands and workloads, many lawyers feel that they must place work as their first and foremost priority all of the time. Approximately half of the lawyers sacrifice some of their vacation time due to the demands of their job and/or the difficulty of scheduling holidays around their work schedule. If it were financially possible, most male and female lawyers would prefer to work fewer hours than they do now, and if they had more time they would spend it with their family or in leisure activities. Many of these lawyers expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the time demands of practicing law in terms of both the quantity and unpredictability of the hours required. The time demands of practicing law are also a major source of stress in their lives.

Combining Work and Family

The time demands and priority attached to practicing law often interfere with lawyers' family time. Most of the lawyers in this study are married or living common law and slightly more than half of the study participants have one or more children living with them in their home. Lawyers in this study are generally dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend with their spouse and/or children, and they often feel they are too tired to enjoy the time they are able to spend together. A general concern raised by many of the lawyers in this study is the difficulty for women in combining both a successful career and a balanced family life. While some women attempt to combine a full-time career and raising a family, other women attempt to balance work and family by working reduced hours. Most lawyers have in-home care for their children; female lawyers rely primarily on nannies and male lawyers are more likely to have wives at home. Virtually all of the lawyers are satisfied with the extent to which their child care arrangements allow them to meet the demands of their career and the quality of care being provided to their children.

The Division of Household Tasks

Lawyers were asked to indicate who performs specific household tasks around the house. The division of household tasks is fairly traditional where wives tend to do the "female tasks" (e.g., preparing meals and laundry) and husbands tend to do the "male tasks" (e.g., home and car maintenance and repair and outdoor work). Husbands and wives often share with cleaning up after meals, shopping for the household, and banking and paying the bills. The majority of all three groups of lawyers have either a nanny or a paid service to help with the housecleaning, and approximately one third have help with their yard work. This allocation of household tasks tends to be reinforced by the use of paid help. When married couples hire household assistance for female tasks (e.g., housecleaning and laundry) it appears that this alleviates the husbands from contributing to these tasks. When married couples hire assistance for the more male tasks of home repair and outdoor work, it appears that this relieves the wives from being responsible for these tasks. From their responses it appears that wives, whether they are female lawyers or the wives of male lawyers, appear to be responsible for the burden of housework. While about half of the spouses feel the division of housework is fair between them and their partner, one-third feel the women do more than what is fair.

Coping With Stress

Lawyers were asked to identify the major sources of stress in their lives and how they cope with these stresses. Most lawyers reported experiencing considerable stress both recently and over the past year and about half indicated that most of their stress was primarily due to work. Several different coping strategies were identified by lawyers in this study. For example, many lawyers surveyed indicated that they often turn to their spouse and family for support when they are coping with the stresses they encounter in their day-to-day lives and to their spouse and other lawyers when they are dealing specifically with work-related stress. Lawyers' spouses are often helpful in coping with the stresses of the job by providing emotional support (i.e., by listening and offering support and encouragement) and/or informational support (i.e., by

offering helpful advice and suggestions, often because they are also lawyers and also understand). Other lawyers also indicated in their comments that they attempt to keep their work in perspective and recognize the more important priorities in their lives. Others try to place limits on their work time so it does not take over their entire life. Lawyers from all three groups indicated that working shorter hours and/or having more time would make their lives easier.

Temporary Absences From Law

Lawyers were asked whether they have taken any significant breaks or time off since they first started practicing law. The purpose of the inquiry was to determine if lawyers were using such breaks as a coping strategy to relieve the stresses of practicing law and if so, whether the strategy was effective. If they had taken a leave they were asked about the reason for their leave and whether they felt they were treated any differently upon their return. The findings at this stage of the study suggest that men and women take temporary leaves for different reasons and they experience different treatment following their return to work. The few men who took a temporary leave from the practice of law generally did so in order to upgrade their skills through continuing their education or taking a sabbatical. All of the men who returned to the same place of work reported that they were treated the same as they were before. Approximately one half of the women who were surveyed have taken a leave of absence and most of these women have taken one or more maternity leaves. The majority of the women who have taken a maternity leave feel they were treated differently upon their return either because they had children or because they returned to their jobs part time. Specifically, they felt that members of their firm considered women who had children and/or returned to work part time were less committed to their career.

Part-Time vs. Full-Time Work Arrangements

Lawyers were asked to describe their work hours and work arrangements. Recent studies have indicated that while male lawyers seldom work reduced hours, some female lawyers adapt their work hours to meet the demands of their family. The results of this study support this research. Of the 22 lawyers contacted who were working reduced hours or part time, all are women. These women generally left full-time practice to work part time to have more time for their children. Women working part time are more likely to have children and their children are generally younger than those of the lawyers working full time. The women working part time in this study work, on average, 37½ hours a week at the office and at home and one quarter of these women work 40 hours a week or more. In many jobs, 35 hours a week is considered working full time. Many of the women working part time indicate that they take work home or feel they should be "on call" when they are at home in order to meet their clients' needs and demands in a timely fashion. The women working part time often feel they have sacrificed their earning potential and promotion opportunities and if they are employed in law firms, they are off the partnership track. Most women working part time feel that it allows them to achieve a better balance between work and family, and few regret their decision to change from full time to part time. An interesting finding of this study is that women working part time report spending significantly less free time in leisure activities and less free time alone with their spouses than male and female lawyers working full time.

Alternatives to Traditional Law Firm Practice

Participants were asked whether they think they will continue to practice law as they are now in their current job or whether they might change jobs in the near future. Lawyers' answers to this question show an interesting finding in that many law firm lawyers regard in-house practice as an attractive alternative to their current situation. Lawyers who might consider leaving their current job would prefer to have a less demanding one that offers more reasonable work hours and less job stress. For many, this seems to entail leaving law firm practice and going to work in-house. Moreover, the lawyers practicing in-house or in government offices support this view. Lawyers who have left a law firm to practice law elsewhere appear quite satisfied with this decision. They report that they have considerably more control over their hours and less stress in their lives. Women in this study who have made the transition from full time to part time generally seem satisfied with their career change, although they recognize they have sacrificed earnings potential and promotion opportunities. It appears that it may be difficult to leave law firm practice, however, because of the stigma attached with quitting and the financial rewards it offers.

The New Generation of Lawyers

Many junior lawyers voiced their opinions regarding the time demands and expectations of practicing law and their comments have been presented throughout this report. A common theme is the uncertainty, and in some cases unwillingness, to continue working their current hours. Some believe the time demands are temporary and that as they acquire more experience they will have more control over their work hours. Others feel that even if it is temporary, the time demands are excessive and unreasonable. Still others are considering leaving the practice of law due to their extreme dissatisfaction. More senior lawyers convey a wide range of opinions in regards to the new generation of lawyers. Some feel they are not as committed to the practice of law, others confirm that the extreme time demands are generally limited to the early stages of their career, and others feel genuine concern for the stresses faced by younger lawyers today.

Satisfaction With and Commitment to Practicing Law

As a broad question, lawyers were asked to indicate their overall satisfaction with their career in law. Despite the reports of the excessive time demands and stresses associated with practicing law, most lawyers are generally satisfied with their legal career. Lawyers who are dissatisfied indicate that they feel strained from balancing work and family, drained from the demands of practicing law, or disappointed with the legal profession or the practice of law. Furthermore, most intend to continue working in their current employment situation. Lawyers who might consider leaving their present job would do so in order to obtain one that demands fewer hours, is more compatible with having a family or because they need a change. Many lawyers would continue to practice law if they were financially independent, although most would prefer to work in a part-time capacity.

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Appendix

Interview Protocol

Introduction

Hi, my name is Jean Wallace and [contact or other participant's name] who just participated in the study, gave me your name, and s/he thought you might be willing to participate in a study I'm conducting at the University of Calgary. It's been funded by the Law School Admission Council in the U.S.

I'm a sociology professor at University of Calgary and I've been studying lawyers and their work experiences for a number of years now, and one issue that I have come across involves the difficulties lawyers face in juggling various aspects of their lives because of the demanding nature of practicing law. So I'm studying how lawyers spend their time outside of work and what sorts of strategies lawyers use to try to balance their work, home, and family demands.

Why I'm phoning, is that I want to ask you if you'd be interested in participating in this study by answering some questions in a telephone interview that should take about 30 minutes or so? We can set up a time that would be most convenient for you if now's not a good time—such as during work time or over lunch, or after hours—whichever's best for you.

In accordance with the University's ethics requirements, I need to tell you that your involvement in this study will be kept completely confidential and so will your answers. Your responses will not be identified by your name, but by an ID number, and they will be recorded into the computer as we talk, so you'll likely hear me banging away at the keyboard as we talk. The results of the interviews will be presented in such a way that individual responses cannot be linked to a particular person. If there are any questions you don't want to answer, just let me know and we can go onto the next one. Also, you can stop the interview at any time if you like

Do you have any questions that you'd like to ask me before we start?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ID Number: _____

Time Interview Started: _____ Time Interview Finished: _____

Sex: 1 = Male 0 = Female

A. FIRST, I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR WORK HISTORY AND WORK EXPERIENCES.

1. In what type of setting are you currently practicing law?

   1. solo practice
   2. law firm with _____ lawyers
   3. government with _____ lawyers
   4. corporation with _____ lawyers
   5. other: _____ with _____ lawyers

2. In what year were you called to the Bar? 19___ And how old are you now? ____

3. Have you taken any significant breaks or time off since you were called to the Bar?

   1 = **Yes** 0 = No
   If **yes:**
   - when did you take the time off (e.g., what year) and how much time did you take?
   - why did you take the time off?
   - did you feel you were treated any differently by your employer or colleagues when you returned?
   - If so, how?

4. During the past year, how much paid vacation time were you allowed and how much did you actually take? Amount allowed: _____ weeks Amount taken: _____weeks

   - If amount taken is **shorter** than allowed:
     Why didn't you take the amount of vacation you were entitled to?

5. I want to ask you a few questions about the hours you work: What time do you usually start work, and what time do you usually finish? Full time = 1 Reduced Hours = 2

   - Time in: _____Time Out: _____
   - On average, how many evenings a week do you usually work an hour or more?
     1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   - On average, how many hours do you usually work on the weekend? _____
   - All in all, how many hours a **week** do you work on average at the office? _____ and at home? _____

6. Do you feel you **have** to work these hours or do you feel you choose to work the hours you work, or is it more of a **combination** of the two?

   1 = have to work hours
   2 = choose to work hours
   3 = combination of both
   - Why do you think you feel this way? Or how do you feel the pressure?
   - If **have** to work: where does this pressure come from, e.g., employer, family, clients?

7. If you could **work a few hours** less a week, what would you do with the **extra time**?

8. Do you **intend to continue practicing law** as you are in your current employment situation for some time?

   Yes, intend to continue (1) No, do not intend to continue (0)
   - Why or why not?
   - How might your situation change?

B. NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TIME YOU SPEND OUTSIDE OF WORK, STARTING FIRST WITH HOW YOU SPEND YOUR FREE TIME.

1. In an average week, about how may days of the week are you able to enjoy some **"free time"**; that is, time that is yours to do with as you'd like? This does not include doing housework, running errands, taking care of children, or sleeping.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 days a week

   And, in an average week, about how many hours in total do you think you are able to spend as "free time"? _____hours a week

2. **What** do you **usually** do with your free time (e.g., relax and read, watch tv, hobbies, etc.)?

   - Do you usually spend this time alone or is there anyone in particular who you usually spend your free time with most of the time?

     Usually alone Usually with someone else _____

   - Is this person/Are these people in any way involved with your job (e.g., coworker, client?) 1 = Yes 0 = No

     If work-related, how so?

   - Where do you spend this time in these activities (at home or somewhere else)?

C. NOW IN TERMS OF HOME RESPONSIBILITIES

1. On average, on days that you work, about how much time do you spend on home chores, such as cooking, cleaning, repairs, shopping, yard work, paying bills, etc.?

   _____ hours a day

2. Do you have any **paid help** in doing certain chores around the house either on an occasional or seasonal basis (e.g., gardening, shoveling snow) or on a more regular, long-term basis (e.g., housekeeping, meal preparation)?

   1 = **Yes** 0 = No
   - **If yes**, which tasks and how often?
   - **If yes**, how do you [and your spouse] decide which tasks to pay someone else to do?

3. Do you spend time with or help out other family members, relatives, or close friends who do not live in your home in terms of household assistance (e.g., home repair, cut grass, etc.) or personal assistance (e.g., just to visit or check up on, take to doctors, help with banking/shopping, etc.). 1 = **Yes** 0 = No

   If **yes:**
   - how is this person related to you? (e.g., parent, adult child, neighbor)
   - what sorts of things do you help them out with?
   - how regularly do you help them out (e.g., number of days per week and hours per week)? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 days per week _____ hours a week

D. NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A BIT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY SITUATION

1. Can you tell me your marital status?

   1 = Single, never married
   2 = Common law/married
   3 = Separated/divorced
   4 = Widowed
   5 = Other: _____

2. How many years have you been married/common law? _____ years

3. Do you have any children living with you? 1 = Yes 0 = No

   If yes: Can you tell me their ages?
   Child #1 = _____ years old
   Child #2 = _____ years old
   Child #3 = _____ years old
   Child #4 = _____ years old
   Child #5 = _____ years old

4. Do you have anyone else living in your home with you who isn't a spouse or child (e.g., parent, sibling, other relative, etc.)? 1 = Yes 0 = No

   If yes:
   - what is their relationship to you?
   - why do they live with you?

IF NOT MARRIED/COMMON LAW AND KIDS GO TO SECTION E:

IF NOT MARRIED/COMMON LAW AND NO KIDS GO TO SECTION F:

5. Does your partner work? Yes No **IF NO GO TO QUESTION 6**

   If **yes**:
   - what is his/her occupation? _____
   - what time does s/he usually go to work and what time does s/he usually finish? Time in: _____ Time Out: _____
   - On average, how many evenings a week does s/he usually work an hour or more? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   - On average, how many hours does s/he usually work on the weekend? _____
   - All in all, how many **hours a week** does s/he work on average at the office? _____ and at home? _____

6. I'd like to ask you about the **relative contribution** you and your spouse make to some of the most time-consuming household activities:

	you always	**you usually**	**both of you equally**	**spouse usually**	**spouse always**	**other: specify**
who prepares meals on a regular basis?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:
who cleans up after meals?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:
who does the home repair & maintenance?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:
who shops for food and the household?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:
who takes care of car maintenance & repair?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:
who does the house cleaning (dusting, vacuuming)?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:
who does the outdoor work, repairs & yard work?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:
who does laundry & ironing?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:
who does the banking & pays the bills?	you always	you usually	both equally	spouse usually	spouse always	other:

7. How do you and your partner determine who does what tasks around the house, say for example, doing the laundry or making meals?

8. Overall, how would you describe the **fairness** in the division of your household tasks between you and your spouse? Fairness does not necessarily mean the division is equal or 50-50.

   5 = You do a lot more than what is fair
   4 = You do a little more than what is fair
   3 = It is pretty fair for the two of you
   2 = Your spouse does a little more than what is fair
   1 = Your spouse does a lot more than what is fair

   - Even if you feel the division of tasks is pretty fair between the two of you, are there any specific tasks in particular that you feel you or your partner should do more of for things to be more equitable between you (e.g., doing the dishes, gardening, banking?)

9. How much of your **free time**, that we talked about earlier, would you say you spend alone with your spouse?

   5 = almost all of it
   4 = most of it
   3 = about half
   2 = some of it
   1 = hardly any of my free time

   - About how many **hours a week** do you and your spouse spend time alone doing something together that is more along the lines of free time or leisure than household chores or work? _____ hours
   - **What sorts of things** do you and your spouse do in your leisure time together? Do you spend most of your time at home relaxing, watching tv? Do you go out alone or with others? Are you involved in sports or hobbies together?

10. How satisfied are you with the **amount of time** you spend alone with your partner?

    4 = very satisfied
    3 = somewhat satisfied
    2 = somewhat dissatisfied
    1 = very dissatisfied

    What is it about the amount of time you spend with your partner that you're dissatisfied with?

11. How satisfied are you with the **quality of time** you spend alone with your partner?

    4 = very satisfied
    3 = somewhat satisfied
    2 = somewhat dissatisfied
    1 = very dissatisfied

    Can you tell me why are you dissatisfied with the quality of time you spend with your partner?

12. In terms of your career practicing law, I want to ask you a few questions about how **supportive** your spouse is of your career:

    - Do you **talk** about your work-related difficulties with your spouse? 1= Yes 0= No
    - **If no**, why don't you talk to your spouse about your work-related difficulties? Is there someone else you talk to?
    - **If yes**, is your **spouse supportive and helpful** in coping with the stresses of your job? 1 = Yes 0 = No
    - If yes, how do they provide support and help you cope?
    - Is s/he supportive of you continuing to work as you are now in terms of the time demands, position, etc.? Or would s/he prefer you quit practicing law or change jobs?
      1 = Support current situation
      0 = Prefer quit/change jobs

      Why do you think s/he feels this way?
    - What about if you wanted to **quit or work fewer hours or work part time**—If you felt your job was getting to be too demanding or stressful or you just have simply had it with your boss or something else at work, how understanding would your spouse be if you decided to quit or work fewer hours?

E. CHILD CARE (IF NO KIDS - GO TO SECTION F)
NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR CHILD-CARE ARRANGEMENTS.

1. On average, on the days that you're working, about how much **time** do **you** spend either taking care of or doing things with your child/ren? _____ hours a day

    - And when your **spouse** is working, about how much time does s/he spend with your child/ren? _____ hours a day

2. Can you describe the **child care arrangements** you have while you're at work in terms of whether your child/ren stay at home or go somewhere else, who provides the care and for how many **days per week** and how many **hours a day**?

    (in-home vs. out of home; paid vs. unpaid; family member vs. not; before and after school care)

3. How **satisfied** are you with your child care arrangements in terms of being able to meet the demands of your career?

   4 = very satisfied
   3 = somewhat satisfied
   2 = somewhat dissatisfied
   1 = very dissatisfied

   - **If dissatisfied:** how would you like to change them?

4. How **satisfied** are you with your child care arrangements in terms of the **quality of care** being provided to your child/ren?

   4 = very satisfied
   3 = somewhat satisfied
   2 = somewhat dissatisfied
   1 = very dissatisfied

   - **If dissatisfied:** how would you like to change them?

5. Are there any difficulties with these arrangements and meeting the demands of your job or if something unexpected comes up? 1 = Yes 2 = No

   - Can you describe to me how you make arrangements at short notice if your child/ren gets sick, or you need to stay late at work, or just if you want to go out that night?

6. When the children are at home (for medical reasons, teacher's professional development days, or require transportation) who leaves work most often:

   1 = you
   2 = your partner
   3 = your partner and yourself leave work equally
   4 = one of us is usually at home (who?)_____
   5 = there is someone else in the home (relative or paid child care worker) (who?) _____

7. Whose job is more flexible about meeting your child care needs?

   1 = Mine 2 = My partners

   - In what ways do they offer flexibility that makes it easier to juggle work and family demands?

8. Who do you feel is the **primary decision maker** in choosing the child-care arrangements for your child/ren?

   1 = primarily you
   2 = primarily your spouse
   3 = you and your spouse equally?

9. How satisfied are you with the **amount of time** you spend with your child/ren?

   4 = very satisfied
   3 = somewhat satisfied
   2 = somewhat dissatisfied
   1 = very dissatisfied

   Can you tell me why you're dissatisfied with the amount of time?

10. How satisfied are you with the **quality of the time** you spend with your child/ren?

    4 = very satisfied
    3 = somewhat satisfied
    2 = somewhat dissatisfied
    1 = very dissatisfied

    Can you tell me why you're dissatisfied with the quality of the time you spend with your child/ren?

F. FOR ALL RESPONDENTS

1. How often do you feel your work keeps you from spending time that you would like to spend?

on yourself?	with your family?
5 = almost always	5 = almost always
4 = frequently	4 = frequently
3 = about half the time	3 = about half the time
2 = occasionally	2 = occasionally
1 = almost never	1 = almost never

2. How often does your **home life** interfere with your responsibilities at work (such as getting your work done on time or getting your daily tasks done)?

responsibilities at work
5 = almost always
4 = frequently
3 = about half the time
2 = occasionally
1 = almost never

3. In general, can you tell me how satisfied you are with the ways things are going right now in terms of

    your marriage or relationship
    your family life,
    your career, and
    your overall life satisfaction?

    Starting first with your marital situation, are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

Marriage/Relationship	**Family Life**	**Way Career is Going**	**Life in General**
4 = Very Satisfied	4 = Very Satisfied	4 = Very Satisfied	4 = Very Satisfied
3 = Satisfied	3 = Satisfied	3 = Satisfied	3 = Satisfied
2 = Dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied
1 = Very Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied

4. Is there any one thing you would like to **change** to make your life easier in terms of meeting your various demands and responsibilities?

    - And what one thing would you **not change** or give up, even though it might make your life easier?

5. Can you describe how much **stress** you have experienced over the **past two weeks**

   4 = a lot
   3 = a moderate amount
   2 = a little
   1 = or almost none?

   What has been the major source of this stress over the past two week?

6 How much **stress** would you say you have experienced in the **past year**?

   4 = a lot
   3 = a moderate amount
   2 = a little
   1 = or almost none?

   What has been the major source of this stress over the last year?

7. What are the three most important **sources of support** in your life in terms of coping with life's ups and downs?

   What are the three most important sources of support in your life in terms of coping with your **work-related** ups and downs?

8. Would you say you feel **rushed**

   3 = almost all of the time
   2 = some of the time
   1 = almost never?

9. Where do you feel the **most rushed**?

   1 = at work
   2 = at home
   3 = someplace else (where?) _____
   Why do you think you feel the most rushed there?

10. Where do you feel the most **relaxed**?

    1 = at work
    2 = at home
    3 = someplace else (where?) _____

    Why?

11. Where do you feel the most **in control**

    1 = at work
    2 = at home
    3 = someplace else (where?) _____

    Why do you feel this way?

12. Where do you feel you have the **most fun?**

    1 = at work
    2 = at home
    3 = someplace else (where?) _____

    Why do you think this is so?

13. If you had enough money to live as comfortably as you'd like, would you prefer:

    1 = to work full time
    2 = to work part time
    3 = to do volunteer types of work
    4 = to be at home caring for your family
    5 = or some other combination or set up (specify) _____

14. In studying how individuals and families cope with balancing the demands of their work and nonwork lives, we're usually interested in getting a rough idea of their financial resources. As I read off a series of income brackets can you let me know when I get to the one that best represents your household's annual earnings?

    1. < $100,000
    2. $100 to $200,000
    3. $200 to $300,000
    4. $300 to $400,000
    5. $400 to $500,000
    6. $500 to $600,000
    7. $600 to $700,000
    8. $700 to $800,000

15. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about or any comments that you want to add that you feel are important, that would help me in understanding your experiences as a lawyer and how you juggle your job demands and other aspects of your life?

    I'd like to send you a day diary form for you to complete. It simply requires that you record all your daily activities for a single 24 hour period, such as making meals, running errands, your leisure time, etc., so that I can see exactly how lawyers' time outside of work is spent. I can mail, fax, or e-mail you the form, and you can return it by mail, fax or e-mail. It's seven pages in length, so can I fax it to you? _____ (FAX) or e-mail it to you? _____ Can you fill it out on _____? I'm trying to make sure that I get people to fill out different days so if I fax it to you today, can you fill it out starting tomorrow?

    Mailing Address :

    Also, can you give the names and phone numbers of other practicing lawyers who you think might be interested in participating in this study? They just need to be practicing lawyers—it doesn't matter if they're single or married or have kids or not, or if they're men or women. If you'd like to call them first and tell them about the study, that'd be great, and I'll plan to call them tomorrow. Thank you very much for participating in this interview and the time diary.

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Author(s): Jean E. Wallace

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